COMMENTARY

THE PERILS OF POLITICAL MODERATION

Our Self-Defeating Party System

DENNIS H. WRONG

AMERICANS, particularly those of conservative inclination, invariably draw a sharp contrast between the stability and continuity of their domestic political institutions and the turmoil and endless experimentalism of continental European politics. The structure of American government, they point out, was established by the Constitution at the end of the 18th century and has endured ever since. Our two parties are almost as venerable, whereas even Britain, whose institutions are rock-like in their stability, has witnessed the rise of a new major party in the present century. In the United States, movements, causes, third and fourth parties come and go, but the Republicans and Democrats go on forever. Continental Europe, on the other hand, has in the past two centuries experienced a succession of revolutions, restorations, the scrapping and rewriting of constitutions, and the rise, triumph, and decline of parties and regimes. The image of a fickle Europe continually lusting after new "isms" and ideological absolutes, always prepared to pull down the foundations of civil society in order to build new ones conforming to the latest abstract blueprint, has recently become a staple of American conservative thinking. It has largely replaced that older and more naive version of American "exceptionalism" which saw Europe as a continent wracked by ancient and incomprehensible quarrels that had no relevance to the New World.

In at least one respect, however, the older view is closer to the truth than its successor: if European political systems have proved to be unstable and have been subjected to endless tinkering, the main political tendencies on the Continent have nevertheless shown remarkable continuity. In fact, the very instability of European regimes is partly to be accounted for by the survival of the passions and symbols of past conflicts in the heart of the political community. We hope today that Fascism and National Socialism will prove to be the first major exceptions to this rule of ideological longevity.

The writers who lay stress on the durability of our formal system of government and our two parties also fail to give adequate attention to the coming and going of new movements, which is at least as constant a feature of American politics as the perpetuation of the original institutional design. American political history is punctuated with movements and causes which suddenly burst

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FOR some time now, both major political parties have stressed the "politics of moderation," with the result that neither has any defined social program. DENNIS H. WRONG, a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY since 1949, is now a professor of sociology at Brown University.

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upon the scene, capturing the fervent support of some sections of the population and inspiring others with intense repugnance and fears of impending catastrophe. Yet after a few years of virtually dominating political debate, such movements lose their momentum and soon vanish so completely that future generations are unable to understand how they were capable of arousing such emotions. Anti-Masonry, Know-Nothingism, Free Silver, Prohibition, Ku-Kluxism, Technocracy, Share-the-Wealth, and a host of other fads, fancies, and phobias of the 1930's, are the relevant examples. McCarthyism, now fading into memory, is simply the most recent instance of this curious discontinuity in American political life.

Actually, the discontinuity is in some respects more apparent than real. Much interpretive writing on American politics is an attempt either to show the perpetuation in new guises of unchanging interests and allegiances, or to demonstrate the inherent logic of seemingly sharp reversals of group opinion. Thus Richard Hofstadter has recently argued that the emergence after the dissolution of the People's party of several former Populist leaders as race-baiting demagogues was consistent with strains of belief that were present in the movement from the beginning. Others have traced the ideological trajectory followed by isolationists who were originally egalitarian reformers but became anti-New Deal reactionaries in the 1930's and McCarthyite nationalists in the 1950's. And students of voting trends and the statistics of past elections have found a tenacity in the underlying loyalties of different groups in the electorate which rivals that observed in such countries as France, where Jacobin and Bonapartist sympathies have persisted for over a century, finding expression under a wide variety of party labels.

Yet in America the paradox of the flux of movements and the permanence of the old parties, which successfully contain, absorb, and outlast them but fail to prevent new ones from arising, remains. Which side of this picture one chooses to emphasize is too often a matter of partisanship or of the polemical tasks of the moment. Today the rhetoric of inflamed "conservatives," disillusioned with the Republican party, is simply the counterpart of the "Tweedledum and Tweedledee" view of the parties held by radicals in the 1930's. Centrist liberals and conservatives, on the other hand, have stressed the "brokerage" function of the parties, their capacity to moderate and blunt the edges of group conflict while preserving sufficient flexibility to become vehicles for new political demands generated by social change. The "conventional wisdom," in John Galbraith's phrase, of academic political science affirms Daniel J. Boorstin's assertion that "a pretty good rule-of-thumb for us in the United States is that our national well-being is in inverse proportion to the sharpness and extent of the theoretical differences between our political parties."

A NEW consideration has recently figured in the perennial debate between the proponents of more disciplined parties that really "stand for something" and the defenders of our loose, catch-all coalitions. Shortly after World War II Hannah Arendt remarked that a new criterion must be added to our evaluation of parties and movements: as well as deciding whether we agree with their immediate objectives, share their basic premises, and trust their leaders, we must also make an independent estimate of the likelihood of their becoming totalitarian. This criterion properly takes precedence over all others after the historical catastrophes of this century. But totalitarianism has had a traumatic effect on Western intellectuals, particularly on those who once were in sympathy with the professed goals of the Russian Revolution. And the trauma has sometimes induced a state of hypochondria in which all political outlooks are closely scrutinized for possible totalitarian tendencies, which inevitably are found to flourish, at least in embryonic form, almost everywhere. Thus, since ideological fanaticism is a main ingredient of totalitarian movements, our amorphous, unideological parties are defended as bastions of freedom; even the mildest sug-

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gestion that American politics might benefit from more disciplined and programmatic party organizations is castigated, and a "moderation," of vaguely indicated limits, becomes the hallmark of political virtue.

The most searching and original political and historical interpretations of the past decade have, admittedly, been inspired by an effort to identify the totalitarian mentality behind the surface slogans and ideological catchwords of a variety of political and religious movements. The search for precursors of Fascism and Communism has been our form of re-interpreting history in the light of the present. Richard Hofstadter, Edward Shils, Philip Selznick, and the contributors to *The New American Right* edited by Daniel Bell represent this tendency in discussions of American politics, while Raymond Aron, Franz Neumann, Norman Cohn, as well as Hannah Arendt herself, are among the writers who have re-examined European politics and history from a similar point of view. On the whole they are free from the extreme hypochondriacal reaction to totalitarianism. And few of the American writers have specifically defended the traditional American two-party system as a necessary bulwark against it. Yet a way of seeing, however penetrating, is also a way of not seeing, and the main effect of their work has been to add considerable force to the older, more complacent arguments supporting our kind of party politics.

The study of totalitarianism requires a holistic approach to society, one that ignores the conventional divisions of human conduct into political, economic, religious, and "social" activities. And the study of new mass movements is necessarily directed to the boundaries where, as John Berryman once put it, "political life issues from social life like a somatic dream." Such movements arise at the point of intersection between the spheres of public and private life, between the associational life of society and formal political organizations such as parties, legislatures, the state itself. The writers who have ransacked modern history in search of forerunners and seedbeds of totalitarianism have thus adopted a global, sociological approach to contemporary society. They have stressed such fundamental features of modern life as the rootlessness and mobility of masses, the increasing remoteness and anonymity of those who exercise political power, the spread of status anxieties among groups who have experienced abrupt increases or decreases in their standards of living, and, more generally, the twin forces of urbanization and industrialization which are continuously reshaping the everyday life of modern man. The importance of these developments as prerequisites for the growth of conspiracy-mongering and collective paranoia is not to be doubted, but by stressing them exclusively modern society itself, often defined as "mass society," comes to be seen as the cause of destructive political movements, discriminations within it are blurred, and the part played by more circumscribed factors such as the party system is minimized.

If NEO-CONSERVATIVES overemphasize the stability of American institutions, the arguments of the post-totalitarian writers seem to lead to the conclusion that the United States is more prone to paranoid extremist movements than other contemporary societies. Are not all of the sociological features of "mass society" more marked here than elsewhere? The two points of view, of course, are often combined, the dangers of totalitarian infection being invoked to support conservative authorities, the rule of law, the separation of governmental powers, and the amorphousness of our political parties.

Those who fear that programmatic parties breed ideological fanaticism overlook several important facts. To begin with, they fail to distinguish between *parties* and *movements*. In no modern nation has an established political party which has functioned in a democratic context as a vote-seeking organization ever become the instrument of revolutionary extremism. In fact, totalitarian movements of the left and right, both in Europe and America, have invariably posed as enemies not only of the existing parties

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but of party itself. I do not wish to imply that all challenges to the party system are necessarily totalitarian: disgust with the petty divisiveness of party politics and the higgling and bickering of the politicians is probably endemic in a democratic society. But the fact is plain that totalitarian, pre-totalitarian, quasi-totalitarian, and more traditional anti-democratic movements of an authoritarian nationalist cast have exploited this mood and have gone to considerable lengths to distinguish themselves from "ordinary" parties. The cry for a leader or movement "above the parties"; denunciations of party politics as a sinister fraud featured by sham contests for votes and *sub rosa* deals between venal parliamentarians; contempt for detailed programs and the exaltation of movement, dynamism, and will as ends in themselves; the demand for an all-embracing loyalty independent of the calculus of material interests to which the established parties appeal—all of these have been salient traits of such movements.

One might conclude from this that it is not the identification of democratic parties with clear-cut ideologies that creates totalitarian fanaticism, but rather the discrepancy between the professed ideals of the parties and their actual practices: their apparent failure to stand for anything except the spoils of office and the narrow group interests of their supporters. A number of studies of the followers of extremist movements in both Europe and America indicate that they are drawn disproportionately from the ranks of those with previous histories of political apathy and lack of affiliation with any of the existing parties. The political activation of these non-party masses in a period of national crisis has often preceded the deterioration of democratic institutions and an increase in the influence of messianic mass movements. From this it is sometimes concluded that the much deplored apathy of the American electorate, as reflected in low rates of voting, is a blessing in disguise. And indeed it does indicate the absence of the crisis atmosphere in which extremist movements thrive. But it may also indicate the existence of a potential following for a totalitarian movement should a crisis develop.

Now I do not wish to appear to be simply conjuring up once again the bogey of totalitarianism, this time by inverting the emphasis of the new-style defenders of our party system and arguing that it is the absence of significant differences between the parties which encourages destructive mass movements. The image of enraged, politicized masses rejecting the party system and flocking to the banners of paranoid demagogues has been deeply burned into our consciousness by the events of this century. But if another great depression is avoided and the standard of living continues to rise or at least is stabilized, totalitarianism may represent an interlude in Western history that we have outgrown, although the same cannot be said, unhappily, for other parts of the world. Yet if what sociologists have called the "privatization of life"—apathy toward public affairs combined with intense concentration on private ambitions and satisfactions—is destined to spread, it too poses dangers to democratic institutions in permitting organized minorities of extremist persuasions to dominate the political stage. The collapse of the Fourth Republic in France and, it can be argued, the McCarthy era in the United States illustrate these newer dangers; moreover, both were, though in different ways, consequences of the discrediting of a party politics in which partisanship appeared to lack meaningful content.

That the looseness and decentralization of our parties and the relative lack of clearly discernible differences between them does lead to apathy and disgust with politics seems to me to be undeniable. I have often been struck by the ferocity with which ordinary college students express their revulsion for politics and politicians: they display not merely the cynicism often exhibited by their elders but genuine moral indignation, a deep conviction that politics is a realm of utter baseness, self-seeking, and hypocrisy. Often they voice the naive wish, always trotted out at Presidential elections by writ-

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ers of letters to the editor, that the whole business might be dispensed with by having the parties agree on the "best man," thus sparing the nation the sordid spectacle of an election campaign. Such an attitude is not, of course, peculiar to the United States, but it is surely less common in Britain and some of the Commonwealth and Scandinavian countries where the parties stand in the public mind for unmistakably contrasting principles and policies.

In Britain and Canada influential parties of the moderate left served to some extent as buffers against Communist infiltration in the 1930's and 1940's. Communism won adherents among young intellectuals and trade unionists in these countries as well as in the United States, but involvement with it usually proved to be less demoralizing where allegiance to its doctrines could be experienced as consistent with support of an established democratic socialist party and Communist ideology assumed the appearance of being simply a more militant version of a radical tradition already upheld by large and powerful organizations. As Gabriel Almond observes in *The Appeals of Communism,* a study of a large sample of American and European ex-Communists: "The entire Communist experience in England seems to be a milder, less malignant phenomenon than is true of the United States. Joining the British party does not ordinarily involve as grave an act of deviation as is the case in this country. The British party has been far less Bolshevik than the American."

The featurelessness of the Democratic party and the fumbling, improvised character of the New Deal made it easier for the Communists to step in and fill the ideological and organizational vacuum on the American left at the time of the depression. The decentralized structure of our parties and their lack of distinctive outlook permit a valuable flexibility, but also make it possible for small extremist groups to seize the limelight and appear to speak for one of the great parties. McCarthyism is another case in point. Although alarmist liberals bemoaned the spread of national "hysteria" and pictured McCarthy as the leader of a powerful, crypto-fascist mass movement, there is little evidence from opinion polls or election results that this was ever the case. Moreover, the most obvious and tangible index of the depth of mass emotions suggests the opposite: the almost total failure of political passions to erupt into physical violence. Political struggles in the 20's and 30's, by contrast, frequently led to violence: riots, the kidnapping and beating of radicals and union organizers, pitched battles between strikers and police, and even political murders, were fairly common.

Not McCarthy's greatly exaggerated mass support but the fact that he was able to present himself for a time as a spokesman for the Republican party and later for a powerful faction within it, justifies concern over the presence of a "totalitarian potential" in American society. Not the fury of the mob but the indifference and lack of courage of the powerful, made him a danger. Complex modern societies will, even in times of stability, always produce extremists of various types: saintly persons who insist on understanding quite literally the ideals professed by all, visionary geniuses striving to transcend the limits of historical fate, shrewd power-seeking demagogues, and paranoid personalities displacing private emotions onto public objects. What is important is that they be kept at arm's length from the centers of power, and success in this task is a measure of the health of a political community.

AN INDISCRIMINATE insistence on "moderation" is not necessarily conducive to such health. If conservative political theories rationalize and systematize the inarticulate prejudices of the ordinary man, and radical theories do the same for his grievances, the recent tendency to extol moderation as the cardinal political virtue stands in a like relationship to the deeply rooted preference for the "middle of the road" of the English-speaking peoples. And, like conservatism and radicalism, "moderatism" too can harden into a rigid ideology—though professing to be

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anti-ideological—which blocks understanding of the nature of the political process. John Stuart Mill, whom no one has yet charged with being a progenitor of totalitarianism, displayed a true grasp of democratic politics when he wrote, referring to his stand on the Irish problem during the one term he served in the House of Commons:

> . . . if . . . there was any intermediate course which had a claim to a trial, I well knew that to propose something which would be called extreme, was the true way not to impede but to facilitate a more moderate experiment. . . . It is the character of the British people, or at least of the higher and middle classes who pass muster for the British people, that to induce them to approve of any change, it is necessary that they should look upon it as a middle course: they think every proposal extreme and violent unless they hear of some other proposal going still further, upon which their antipathy to extreme views may discharge itself.

Now Mill is certainly doing more here than simply enunciating a rule of shrewd political bargaining, to the effect that one should, in Eastern bazaar style, advance a price to start the bidding in full knowledge that one will have to settle in the end for less. Mill is, of course, prepared to settle for less, and in this sense he is a true moderate, willing to strike a balance between what he would like and what is possible without denouncing the existing system of arriving at political decisions as an iniquitous fraud if he cannot have his way. But he also, as his entire career attests, believed that an ideal standard, a principle of justice, even a Utopian image of a different and better society, should guide the political actor and dictate his initial stand. Mill's allegiance to the established ways of arriving at political decisions was firm; he knew, moreover, that politics, in Max Weber's words, "is a strong and slow boring of hard boards"; but he did not elevate the rules of bargaining and the process of compromise itself into prime objects of veneration. Politics is a matter of clashing principles and interests. Success in resolving and moderating political differences is the test of the institutions regulating political decision-making; the institutions are not the test of the legitimacy of the principles and interests at issue.

What E. M. Forster says of the "golden mean" in thought applies also to "moderation" as a rule for political conduct: "Though proportion is the final secret, to espouse it at the outset is to ensure sterility." Since the very institutions of constitutional democracy are designed to facilitate the attainment of moderate solutions—that is, solutions arrived at after debate and subject before assuming final form to a host of procedural "checks and balances"—"moderation" requires no more than that one be committed to these institutions and to peaceful submission to the final verdicts they produce. Moderation does not require the politically interested to water down or surrender their demands at the very outset on the grounds that they may offend others and disrupt national unity, or because foresight suggests they will prove ultimately to be unattainable once they have been submitted to public and parliamentary judgment and legislative processing.

In over-reaction against the dictum that "the end justifies the means," which is supposed to epitomize the totalitarian mentality (to do so at all accurately it would have to read "the end justifies *any* means"), the exponents of moderatism ignore ends altogether in their preoccupation with the use of proper, i.e. legal and constitutional, means. The result is a political formalism which celebrates the institutional process through which decisions are reached while ignoring the content of the decisions. Our government is one "of laws not of men," we are told, as if it were not continuous conflicts between the purposes and interests of men that make laws necessary in the first place. Emphasis on the means rather than the ends of politics has the further effect of encouraging political actors to conceal or to minimize their substantive interests and values: "it's unconstitutional" becomes an oblique way of saying "I'm against it," which both confuses the substantive issue and breeds disrespect for constitutionality itself. The debate over desegregation provides the best examples.

Moderatism, therefore, confuses allegiance

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to law and constitutionality with the content of political demands. Neither the NAACP nor, for that matter, each and every segregationist group in the South, is subverting our institutions by failing to observe "moderation" in taking positions on civil rights that must eventually be compromised if they are to lead to specific political decisions. Small "ginger groups" in legislative bodies, whether they represent the viewpoint of the Utopian left or the ultra-nationalist right, are not to be deemed "extremists" undermining democracy *simply* because they initially adopt a stand that will almost certainly not prevail. Their positions should be criticized, if they warrant criticism, on substantive grounds, not with reference to a criterion of "moderation" that is treated as a measure of commitment to the democratic process itself. Legislators and organizations like the NAACP are, of course, closer to the central decision-making machinery of government than the ordinary citizen, and to that extent should and must be "realistic" in taking into account the probabilities of the bargaining process. But the public and those intellectuals who raise political demands are in a different position. If they are wrong to excoriate the politicians as opportunists when the latter refuse to be bound by the demands of ideological purity and haggle and compromise with the opposition, they are equally wrong to submit to a kind of self-censorship in the name of moderation. Intellectuals of all people are least required to view politics from the vantage point of the "realistic" politician whose responsibility it is to thrash out compromises between rival policies in the halls and lobbies of Congress and in the offices of the executive branch of the government.

Moderatism invites one's opponents to become extremists, obdurately refusing to lower their initial demands because by standing firm they can establish the terms in which debate and procedural struggle are conducted before a final decision is reached. A "moderate" position on any issue becomes entirely relative, since the surrender at the outset by one side of its demands shifts the position towards the other side. Yesterday's moderates become today's extremists and vice-versa. Who can deny that such drifts of opinion occur frequently in American politics and contribute to the extraordinary discontinuities in our political climate from one decade to the next?

THESE discontinuities are reflected in the apparently sudden rise of movements and currents of opinion outside the two-party system which sweep through the parties carrying all before them until they are finally spent and vanish as abruptly as they emerged.* Our loose and fragmented parties encourage and accentuate such sharp changes in the political climate because, lacking any commitment to firm principles, they impose no barriers to the flow of opinion from one pole to the other.

American society has always been divided into a multitude of disparate economic interest groups, ethnic blocs, and regions, and our coalition parties have usually moderated destructive conflicts between them and, by the unconscious application of Calhoun's Doctrine of the Concurrent Majority, prevented any one of them from gaining the upper hand for very long. Our party system has thus helped maintain a tolerable degree of national unity and political civility under difficult conditions. Do these familiar considerations, so heavily stressed by the "moderatists" and defenders of our party system, require us, then, to bow to a sociological determinism which rules out the possibility of any other party system short of all-or-nothing ideological conflict leading ultimately to totalitarianism?

That highly centralized party organizations imposing a uniform viewpoint on all members and candidates are both undesirable and inconceivable in the United States may be conceded. The sole alternative to our kind of two-party system is not, let it be emphasized, the political realignment, so ardently

*An argument similar in many respects to that advanced here has been developed by Harvey Wheeler in a brilliant article, "Constitutional Obsolescence in a Democratic Party System," *Ethics*, January 1957, pp. 79-88.

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desired by zealous partisans of left and right, which would segregate all the conservative sheep from the liberal goats by shepherding each into strongly barricaded party pens. Any two-party system in a complex industrial society must inevitably consist of parties divided into rival wings and factions, usually a left, right, and center. Nor is it my intention to question the advantages of a two-party system as such over a multi-party system, although it might be noted in passing that Americans are haunted by the specter of France and terrified of multi-party politics to a thoroughly irrational degree. Recognition of the superiority and inevitability of parties containing internal factions, however, does not require endorsement of the American system where each of the two parties includes groups embracing the entire spectrum of opinion—where, in short, both parties are not merely coalitions but almost identical coalitions. Does the heterogeneity of American society really compel us to prostrate ourselves in admiration before the "hidden logic" of a party system that groups conservative racist Southerners together with Negroes and welfare-conscious liberals in one party and rural fundamentalists with white-collar suburbanites in the other?

A sharper division between the parties would not necessitate their becoming monolithic groups, totally lacking in internal differentiation. Nor would a two-party system in which the right wing of the "left" party stands to the left of the left wing of the "right" party rule out the possibility of coalitions across party lines on particular issues to balance or restrain drifts to the extremes within either party. As British experience shows, the "vital center" need not perish under such a system; it will merely dominate less easily and less flaccidly. A clear line of division between the parties checks the seductive appearance of an indiscriminate moderatism that blurs all issues.

THE moderatist defense of the traditional American party system is, like all conservative ideologies, the defense of something over which the shades of time and change are already falling. For the trend toward the "nationalization of politics" observed by all students of our contemporary political life points to the gradual transformation of the parties into more centralized and homogeneous organizations. The movement in this direction is, to be sure, a halting one which remains largely unrecognized by the public and the politicians alike. Yet the signs are there, in the increasing alienation of the South from the national Democratic party, in the failure of the "modern Republicans" to alter the stance and image of the GOP, in the growing importance of labor in the Democratic party, and in the decline of regional and local issues as dominant influences on voting. The compulsive bi-partisanship of the 50's owes less to the alleged need, so frequently invoked by neo-conservatives, to compromise the demands of rival blocs and interest groups in American society than to the spread of the ideology of moderatism itself in a period of prosperity and international crisis.

Prosperity and the cold war are likely to be with us for a long time, but our response to them need not remain at the level of the past decade, the decade of "revisionism" devoted to purging ourselves of the simplifications and brutalities of old-fashioned progressivism. A frozen recoil from politics in the face of totalitarianism, and a desperate search for continuity in the face of the felt discontinuities of American life, have been the major impulses behind the *de facto* conservatism of moderatism and the familiar defense of our brand of party politics. There are signs that this conservatism is already dying as we become aware that our situation does not entirely foreclose the need for political choice and innovation. But to call for political innovation, for a new spirit of radicalism, is a different matter from actually supplying it. All one can say is that a moderatism of the "lesser evil," of watchful waiting and limited involvement, is at least to be preferred to a moderatism that rationalizes a retreat from politics under the guise of offering a new philosophy of politics.

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CAN DE GAULLE CHECK THE GAULLISTS?

The Threat of the Extreme Right

RAY ALAN

THE bookseller was fondling a stack of bile-yellow paperbacks devoted to the "Jewish problem." They dated from the period 1937-1943 and he had just bought them secondhand from the widow of a local Vichyite. I told him that if he could let me have them cheap I'd buy them to light my garden bonfire. He was shocked. "They are not frivolous books, Monsieur," he said. "Take this one, for example. Its author is a serious thinker—and a brilliant writer."

"A writer may be brilliant," I said tritely, to draw him out, "and still propagate evil ideas." I tapped the shelf above the anti-Semites. "This man—Léon Daudet—for instance."

He stiffened indignantly. "But Monsieur, I have the highest admiration for Léon Daudet!" By this time three or four browsers had crowded round. Two of them turned out, like the bookseller, to be admirers of Daudet *fils*, Maurras, and an idealized *Action française*. Neither was old enough to have played an active part in the movement but they had mastered its idiom. "England," said one, "failed to subdue us by military means so took her revenge by exporting to us her poisonous parliamentary democracy."

I asked their opinion of the de Gaulle constitution. "Excellent—it is, of course, a monarchist constitution. It permits the head of state to choose his prime minister, instead of having one foisted on him by parliament, and to govern as well as reign—with a minimum of parliamentary interference. As you must know, de Gaulle is a monarchist. Before the war he was a sympathizer of the *Action française*. You will have read his letter to the Comte de Paris in 1957 on the occasion of Prince Henri's marriage."

I had. (The Comte de Paris is the Orleanist pretender to the French throne; Prince Henri is his son.) De Gaulle wrote: "Everything associated with you is exemplary for the nation; and your future, that of Prince Henri, and indeed of all your family are bound up with the hopes of France."

But how explain de Gaulle's present scrupulous republicanism? My monarchists laughed. "There is a classic maneuver in French politics, Monsieur, called *la levée de l'hypothèque*. Its commonest use is to demonstrate that a popular policy, of which the minister or official responsible disapproves, is unworkable. The minister appears to swallow his misgivings, applies the policy ostentatiously, but in such a manner that its former advocates are soon stampeding to dissociate themselves from it. The minister says: 'Well, you wanted it, not I'; and proceeds to do what he wanted to do in the first place. Despite the powers the new constitution gives him, de Gaulle will allow the politicians to play their game almost to the bitter end. It is a game bound to end in crisis—if only because there is no possible political successor to de Gaulle. If de Gaulle were struck by lightning tomorrow the deadlock would be one only another military coup could arbitrate. Before de Gaulle is due to retire he will propose that the problem be resolved finally by making the headship of the state hereditary—in other words, by restoring the monarchy. Public opinion is not ripe for that yet; but it is ripening fast."

De Gaulle's return to power has brought the monarchists their brightest hopes in

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How republican is France's Fifth Republic, being launched under the presidency of General Charles de Gaulle? RAY ALAN is a British correspondent and regular contributor to these pages. His most recent article, "Iraq After the Coup," appeared in our September issue.

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years, and they are getting a good deal of support from leading illustrated weeklies which publicize the Comte de Paris at every opportunity. But other unrepublican forces, too, beside which the monarchists appear relatively moderate, are jubilant over the current trend of French politics—notably the neo-fascist right, two characteristic representatives of which are Maître Jean-Baptiste Biaggi, founder of the strong-arm Patriotic Revolutionary party, now integrated with Jacques Soustelle's victorious Union for the New Republic (UNR), and Pierre Lagaillarde, whose hysterical student following and "poor-white" goon squads were the advance guard of the May 13 riots in Algiers which deflated the Fourth Republic. "Only a dictatorship," Lagaillarde said recently, "can save France." Like Biaggi, he is now a member of the National Assembly, the head of his own army-supported group and informally allied to the UNR.

SOUSTELLE, chief organizer of the UNR and principal coordinator of the intrigues that touched off the May explosion, is perhaps the most influential man in the country after de Gaulle. With antlike industriousness he is quietly manipulating the powerful propaganda machine his stint as Minister of Information enabled him to construct, tightening his links with the army and the business groups in France and Algeria which supplied the bulk of UNR's funds, extending his influence in the police services (which regard him as their champion against left-wing attacks), yet avoiding any ostentatious accretion of power. What his ultimate aims are no one quite knows (his kinder critics say he doesn't know himself but goes on intriguing through force of habit). His recent past is far from reassuring. He was present when the Algiers "Public Safety" committee swore its famous oath to work "till death" to achieve total integration of Algeria and the Sahara with France and the establishment of a "government of Public Safety" from which all "old-gang" politicians would be excluded. Friends of his in the same committee later secured the passage of a resolution (accepted by General Salan) urging the disappearance of political parties and the establishment of a corporative regime based on "family, work, province, and fatherland" (Vichy's slogan, too, was *Travail, Famille, Patrie*). In November he blocked the election of a number of liberal Gaullists, wartime companions of de Gaulle whom the General had wished to see in parliament, by presenting UNR men against them or supporting their "Independent" (ultra-conservative) rivals. Roger Barberot, for example, to whom de Gaulle had written what amounted to an electoral testimonial, was tagged by Soustelle, in a widely circulated leaflet, "a crypto-Communist and defamer of the army." As one group of these authentic *Compagnons de la Libération* pointed out: "Such is Soustelle's adroitness, it is a mistake to speak of a Gaullist victory. The real victors are Soustellists."

The Communists, although far from jubilant, are deriving a certain wry satisfaction from the perspectives opened by the Fifth Republic. Their chief loss is financial (since Communist deputies contribute two-thirds of their salaries to party funds) rather than political. The unvarying negativity of the 145 Communist members of the last National Assembly had begun to discredit the party, and politically it had reached a dead end. The constitutional crisis came as a relief, enabling Communist militants to sport that air of crusading martyrdom they find so becoming. "Reactionary regimes always begin by eliminating the Communists. . . . One UNR deputy represents only 22,000 electors; one Communist deputy represents nearly 400,000. . . ." The collapse of the Mendès-France liberals' and the *France-Observateur* socialists' efforts to build up a non-Communist left is naturally gratifying to them, and the discredit they expect the admittedly dismal Guy Mollet Socialists to fall into when the pendulum swings against the regime is a source of immense anticipatory delight. The commentators who naively wrote the French Communists off on the morrow of the elections were wide of the mark. They remain the country's biggest or-

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ganized party, and will probably have little difficulty in recouping on the labor front the nuisance value they have lost in parliament. And their elimination from parliament is cold comfort for France's allies: the new Assembly will be far more truculently anti-American and anti-British than the old.

THE average Frenchman who voted *oui* on September 28 and for the UNR and its "Independent" allies at the end of November was not concerned with the long-term calculations of monarchists, neo-fascist or Communist tacticians. Nor was he really voting for the new constitution: fewer than 10 per cent of the electorate bothered to read it. While saying "yes" to de Gaulle he was saying "no" to the perennial crises of the last thirty years, and to the corruption and nepotism with which French public life had become riddled. He was also, less admirably, fleeing before a menacing backlog of problems he had made little rational effort to understand, and casting out the Fourth Republic (for whose parties and personalities he had continued to vote up to as recently as last spring) as a scapegoat for his own civic shortcomings—appalled by the discovery that in a democracy an electorate tends to get the sort of government it deserves. It was only by the luckiest of flukes that the *homme providentiel* on whom he was now relying to clear up the mess was a man as upright as Charles de Gaulle.

Paris-based correspondents, French as well as foreign, are often tempted to regard the two or three square miles political and artistic ferment produced by the fantastic centralization of French administrative and intellectual life* as a microcosm of France as a whole —a France of vigorous discussion and constant concern for principles and ideas. Even Jacques Fauvet of *Le Monde,* one of France's shrewdest parliamentary commentators, has described the French electorate as preoccupied with "ideological quarrels" and "pure ideas" and inclined to "elevate even the most banal discussions to the dignity of philosophical controversies." Unhappily, such generalizations are ludicrously remote from reality. It would be more accurate to say that there are few democratic countries in whose political life "pure ideas" and doctrinal discussion are less important. In recent years the members of the French National Assembly have devoted less time to the discussion of major issues, and have been more enslaved by parochial preoccupations and xenophobic reflexes, than the parliamentarians of any other Western democracy. Even the prosaic British Labor party, with its continual discussion of Afro-Asian problems, colonial emancipation, economic priorities, and the ethics of nuclear rearmament, is a beacon of idealism compared with its French opposite number, Guy Mollet's Socialist party, which covered the use of torture in Algeria when last in office and tried to muzzle the press. The "Republican Radical and Radical-Socialist" party has not had an "ideology" or even a coherent short-term program for nearly half a century, and is in fact little more than a coalition of provincial business and administrative clans linked together for purposes of mutual aid. The influential "Independents" are a comparable business-agrarian coalition situated further to the right. The "Popular Republican" movement (MRP) exists primarily to weigh down the ecclesiastical side of the church-state seesaw and minimize unemployment among Catholic politicians. "Christian Democracy" is a splinter of the MRP chipped off by M. Georges Bidault. The UNR's platform is "fidelity to the national and social philosophy of Gaullism," but its spokesmen tend to dismiss requests for an outline of this "philosophy" as "premature." "Our aim is just to be the government party," its secretary-general said, with unusual candor, before the elections, "and to be able to balance between right and left"—which is what the Radicals have been doing for forty years.

Many factors have contributed to the making of this political desert: the unhealed wounds of past social upheavals (a substan-

*One example of this: nearly one half of all French students of university or roughly equivalent level are in Paris.

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tial section of the bourgeoisie is no more eager to see a success made of parliamentary democracy than the Communist party); the complexes arising from the impact on an assertive military tradition, bolstered by a century and a half of conscription, of humiliations such as 1940 and Dien Bien Phu, as a result of which the average middle-class Frenchman is pathetically vulnerable to chauvinistic sloganeering; certain religious influences and habits of thought; a bureaucratized, dogmatic educational system, desperately short of funds, which lays stress on rote-learning and exam-passing and minimizes (even at university level) debate and discussion. Discussion groups, free libraries, and reading-rooms are surprisingly scarce in France, while books and current-affairs periodicals are relatively expensive (a paperback on a current topic costs between three and five dollars—5 per cent of the average Frenchman's monthly earnings). But the major villain is undoubtedly excessive centralization. The French provinces contribute a ruinous subsidy to their capital's sophistication. They are bled of intellectual and administrative talent and bereft even of the right to take an initiative.* Local administration, so valuable a civic nursery in America and Britain, is a barren, frustrating field; and the gap between private citizens—*nous*—and government—*eux*—is wider than in any other democratic state I know. Of a cross section of conscripts polled just over a year ago, 70 per cent were unable to name the Prime Minister, 97 per cent could not name one of their local parliamentary representatives, and 90 per cent did not even know how many houses parliament had. There is a belief that elections are held for the government's and deputies' benefit, not for the people's: *"Ils nous embêtent avec leurs élections,"* a schoolteacher told me recently.

*I know one municipality that has been waiting nearly three years for Paris's authorization to open a camping site. It is an electoral asset for the mayor of a small town in the south of France to have a job in Paris: his ability to lobby the central bureaucracy in quest of permits and credits outweighs the inconvenience of his absence from the town hall.

THE current wave of anti-parliamentarianism in France was first exploited by the Poujadists in 1955-56. It was they who first called for a Fifth Republic and popularized such slogans as *Les députés à la Seine* and the pejorative use of the word *système* (meaning the party system). They helped launch the catchphrase *Algérie française* and much of their financial backing came from Algerian sources. Although M. Poujade's original anti-tax revolt was spontaneous, there are indications that his movement was used in the 1956 election as a trial balloon, to see if French opinion was ripe for a major lurch to the right, by the interests which later financed USRAF† and UNR.

"Le système est mort!" proclaimed UNR leaders after the recent elections. But in some respects the new "system" looks uncannily like the old, and in others it has already drooped lower than the old. Some of the most influential men in the new National Assembly will be those who provoked most of the crises in the last one, resisted rational discussion of North-African problems, and led France to the brink of civil war. Paradoxically, the few men who have consistently proposed positive solutions to France's problems and campaigned to clean up French political life, have been repudiated by the electorate. Pierre Mendès-France fell victim, in a constituency he has represented for twenty-six years, to a vicious campaign of abuse whose main theme was that he had sold out Indochina, Morocco, Tunisia, and India (*sic*) to "Anglo-American Judaeocracy." The Gaullist weekly *Carrefour* distributed posters gloating: "MENDÈS BEATEN—DEFEATISM SWEPT AWAY."

In broad outline, the new Assembly is an adequate reflection of the national mood, but many of its members owe their election to crude electoral cookery and gerrymandering. The right-wing Europeans of Algeria possess one deputy for 48,000 of their number, whereas in France one deputy represents 93,000 constituents; the Algerian Moslems were allotted one deputy for 200,000

†See "The Fourth Republic Abdicates," by the writer, COMMENTARY, July 1958.

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electors. Towns thought to be anti-Gaullist were chopped into constituencies which were then tacked onto Catholic rural areas so as to favor right-wing candidates. (Similarly, the electoral colleges that elect Senators and the President of the Republic are dominated by the representatives of right-wing rural areas.) One successful Gaullist candidate distributed cards to his supporters entitling them to cut prices at certain stores. Others distributed free packets of cigarettes bearing de Gaulle's photo. The "ban" on the electoral use of de Gaulle's name was applied wholly to M. Soustelle's benefit: his UNR proclaimed on its posters: *"Voter UNR c'est voter de Gaulle!"* Newscasters on the state radio (controlled by Soustelle) applied the adjective "Gaullist" to the UNR.

Generals Salan, Massu and their friends have so far shown as little respect for de Gaulle's authority as for his predecessors'. In defiance of his orders, army officers continued to attend meetings of the self-appointed "Public Safety" committees and took an active part in "conditioning" the electorate and selecting candidates. Salan and Massu even sponsored candidates in France. In order to ensure that officers read his directive condemning military intervention in the elections, which Salan had failed to circulate, de Gaulle had to have it published in the press. The votes of more than two million Moslems whose *cartes d'électeurs* had been retained by the army to avoid their falling into rebel hands, were on tap for use as political officers desired. The revelations of certain unsuccessful European candidates who made what they took to be watertight arrangements with one military commander, only to discover that their rivals had made more efficacious arrangements with another, make fascinating reading. Socialists at Bougie called such irregularities to de Gaulle's personal attention: he took no action.

THE last few governments of the Fourth Republic earned the strictures of the International Press Institute for suppressing critical newspapers and arresting their editors (there were forty such cases in the first half of 1957 alone). After an interlude of toleration during the election campaign, the liberal *Express* was again seized in December. Worse, during the summer and fall General de Gaulle allowed M. Soustelle, as Minister of Information, to clamp a straitjacket reminiscent of the Pétain era on the state radio, television, and news agency monopolies; senior officials suspected of undue loyalty to France's parliamentary institutions were removed, and the *Radiodiffusion-Télèvision française* and *Agence France-Presse* transformed into crude instruments of government propaganda.

Justice is apt to be as erratic as in the days of the old "system" when political issues are involved. In November a former Defense Minister and latter-day Gaullist, M. André Morice, brought a libel action against an editor who had accused him of collaborating in the building of Hitler's "Atlantic Wall." A French law excludes from libel suits reference to events that have taken place more than ten years earlier, and the court invoked it to prevent the defendant from producing the evidence that would have substantiated his charges; but it permitted M. Morice's lawyer to refer at length to the fourteen-year-old facts in a speech refuting the charges, and on the strength of this one-sided hearing gave the plaintiff satisfaction! Also in the fall, a military court was convened to liquidate the 1957 "bazooka plot," organized by well-protected, right-wing extremists, to murder General Salan and have him replaced by a "tougher" C-in-C. (Until he underwrote the May 13 *coup* Salan was suspected by the friends of MM. Soustelle and Bidault of harboring liberal thoughts.) The bazooka shells and other materials were supplied to the chief active plotter, a man named Kovacs, through the intermediary of a certain Pierre Joly, by a Captain Despuech on orders reportedly given him by the *Deuxième Bureau* (Intelligence) of Salan's own headquarters. Joly and Despuech were arrested "by accident" by over-zealous investigators and released on orders from the Ministry of the Interior without being interrogated; Kovacs was released on bail with-

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out being required to give evidence and allowed to go to Spain, where he has remained; only minor conspirators, unfamiliar with the politics of the affair, have been sentenced.

At a marathon pre-referendum press conference, General de Gaulle's first Minister of Information, André Malraux, announced the early creation of a "pilot county" in Algeria on TVA lines to exemplify future development; the end of the torture of Algerian prisoners and suspects; the dispatch of three leading French writers to Algeria to investigate torture allegations; and the imminent release of Lieutenant Rahmani, a Moslem officer of the French army who had been jailed after writing to President Coty of the anguish the Algerian war was causing him. Malraux declared the army-organized demonstrations of Moslems carrying banners inscribed *Algérie française* to be "without doubt one of the two most important historical movements of our time" (the other—on the same level!—being the "resurrection of China"), and much else in similar surrealistic vein. The transcript of his press conference is treasured by students of political mores. Nothing more has been heard of the "pilot county" ("You weren't really taken in by that, were you?" officials ask); Catholic dignitaries have backed liberal charges that torture is still resorted to, even in France; no literary or other independent mission has been sent to Algeria (of the three writers Malraux named, two were quite unable to go and the third, having been promised a a rough reception by the army, was understandably unenthusiastic); and M. Soustelle and his Algerian friends lost no time in vetoing the release of Lieutenant Rahmani. Last spring M. Malraux helped launch a petition asking the government of the day to raise the ban on Henri Alleg's anti-torture book *The Question*. He has been one of the ministers responsible for such matters for the last six months, but the book is still banned. *Plus ça change. . . ?*

THE fundamental weakness of the new regime lies in the disagreement between the general and his rank-and-file followers as to the nature of Gaullism. De Gaulle's conception of his own role is monarchical: he sees himself as a symbol of the nation, its representative on certain occasions when major issues are at stake, but aloof from day-to-day administration and politics, descending into the arena only to arbitrate between contradictory theses. For this reason the presidency is more congenial to him than the premiership, though even as Premier he put his concept into practice. For example, when his Finance Minister, M. Pinay, tried to engage him or the cabinet as a whole in overall policy discussions, he said impatiently: "But I've given *you* Finance"—intervening only at his ministers' request to settle their claims on the budget (he increased military and froze educational credits).

He genuinely wanted the November elections to produce a representative spectrum of non-Communist opinion, from the center of which he might choose a competent, respected Premier—he himself graduating to the presidency—and on which he could base a conciliatory national policy. Soustelle understood this—and the importance, therefore, of ensuring the election of a majority responsive to his guidance as a means of exerting pressure on de Gaulle. But most rank-and-file Gaullists believe the converse to be true: that de Gaulle will produce his own solutions to all France's problems out of a hat, as by magic, irrespective of the political conjuncture, and requires of them only unquestioning support.

In the recent elections few candidates dared formulate any specific proposals of their own for dealing with Algeria and other major questions for fear of being left out on a limb when de Gaulle revealed his intentions. Most fought the elections on personal and local issues of the *Clochemerle* type (literally in Haute-Garonne, where the construction of a *urinoir* on the edge of a cemetery at Villefranche-de-Lauragais was a major topic), canvassed Catholic votes by associating themselves wtih the Church's campaign for a bigger slice of the educational pie (this was safe because eight years ago de Gaulle did likewise), undertook

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vaguely to "defend French Algeria," and whipped up a maximum of chauvinistic nationalism directed primarily against the United States and Britain.

Only a tiny minority of candidates made anti-Communism their major theme. (The leader of this school was M. Jean Baylot, a former prefect of police, whose vote-catching recipe is a skillful blend of the Red and Yellow perils. A Guy Mollet socialist until a few weeks ago, when he jumped aboard the Soustelle bandwagon, he warned of the imminence of an Asian onslaught on Europe, and probably had his electors looking under their beds for Mongols and Turks [sic] for weeks afterwards.) At a majority of right-wing and more or less "moderate" meetings the peril was an "Anglo-Saxon" one. America was accused of stirring up the Algerian Moslems against France in order to secure Saharan oilfields, and Britain of making off with France's central African colonies. At one Gaullist meeting I attended, the anti-American hysteria was so extreme that a rival Communist campaigner took the microphone to warn the audience that the French ruling classes were trying to blame the Americans for the Algerian war to hide their own responsibility for it; he was howled down. Candidates praised what they described as de Gaulle's efforts to create a strong Franco-German association to resist Anglo-American and Soviet intrigues (at many meetings a visitor from Mars would have assumed that it was the Germans who had recently liberated France from an Anglo-American occupation). Senator André Méric (another Mollet socialist), for example, explained that the economic aims of the Common Market (France, Germany, Italy, Benelux) were secondary to its political purpose of establishing a neutral bloc in Europe to hold the balance between the "Anglo-American" and Soviet camps. He, too, said the United States and Britain were "actively aiding the Algerian rebels," and for good measure accused them of trying to prevent other peoples from mastering the peaceful exploitation of atomic energy so as to impose their will on the energy-starved nations.

PARISH-PUMP demagogy and xenophobia are pathetic substitutes for the hard thinking and moral courage needed to put France's affairs in order, and many former critics of de Gaulle are now grateful to him for curbing the Assembly's powers. It is to sit for only six months of the year (its first ordinary session is not until April, which gives de Gaulle a useful breathing space), it can be deadlocked by the Senate, and the President can dissolve it if it annoys him. But it can still provoke a crisis by forcing the resignation of the Prime Minister; and as the Prime Minister will be little more than the Chief of State's business manager, deputies will be able to attack de Gaulle's policy through him without incurring charges of disloyalty to the general.

M. Soustelle and other victorious UNR candidates have already given a preview of the tactics they intend to employ to rein in de Gaulle. "The electorate has voted against any kind of contact with the FLN [Algerian rebels]," they say. "After such a vote negotiations with the FLN are unthinkable." As most informed Frenchmen realize, this is oblique criticism of de Gaulle's attempt to open cease-fire negotiations with the FLN in October.*

Nevertheless, while unenthusiastic about the new National Assembly, de Gaulle is less dismayed by it than some of his liberal admirers have tried to make out. He is, after all, a man of the right, more at home in nationalist than internationalist company. The UNR and "Independents" will follow him so long as he talks about grandeur, avoids an autonomist solution in Algeria, and works for the edification in continental Europe and Africa of counterweights to British and American influence. They will certainly vote him all the military and A-bomb credits he requires. Should an uncooperative majority emerge when the bills come in, or a hard decision have to be taken in Algeria, de

*His attempt failed partly because pressure from his right-wing supporters obliged him to insist that the FLN leaders come to Paris (they wanted talks in a neutral capital) and to make a statement which gave the impression that he was angling for their surrender.

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Gaulle's intention would appear to be to lean more directly on unorganized public opinion and the army and tell the politicians to go to blazes. Last October he said: "If, unhappily, the parliament of tomorrow were unwilling to settle down in its allotted role, the parliamentary institution would be swept aside for a long time."

Unfortunately, French public opinion is a fragile reed. It has a built-in bias against any government which has been in power more than eighteen months. It approves of prestige expenditure but not of paying taxes. Its usefulness to de Gaulle will therefore be least when he needs it most. And the army, despite the credits and flattery now being lavished upon it, is likely to disagree with de Gaulle on the same topics as the right-wing extremists in the Assembly.

I have already written in COMMENTARY (July 1958) of the obsession of its more "activist" officers with the need to break the sequence of humiliations and—as they see it—political betrayals that have dogged them in recent years. One senses this thirst for justification, for a victory the world will recognize, in a recent order of the day to the army in Algeria: "You have won a victory of the most sweeping significance. All your efforts and sacrifices have now proved their efficacy. . . . The success which has crowned your enterprise is ample proof of your versatility, your courage, and your intelligence. . . . At last, in the eyes of the world. . . ," etc. The subject of the order of the day was not an epic military campaign but the success of the constitutional referendum! Even this satisfaction has been tarnished, apparently, by suspicions of political betrayal. *La Vie Française* has published this declaration by a general in Algeria: "We won a great victory on May 13 [date of the Algiers coup] but a month later we were stabbed in the back. We won another victory on September 28 [the referendum] but ten days later we were stabbed in the back again by [General de Gaulle's unsuccessful attempt to persuade the army to allow free elections]."

Before de Gaulle arrived in Algiers in December, General Salan called Algeria's seventy-one new deputies to his residence to advise them on their political line. His friends let it be known that in accepting promotion to the post of Inspector-General of the armed forces he was not abandoning his special interest in Algeria: on the contrary, he was eager to go to Paris so as to keep an eye on the orientation of the new "system"; he would also have control of all promotions and transfers. From special officers' training centers in southwest France, meanwhile, reports leaked out of pep-talks and political indoctrination of which the *leitmotif* was the need to carry on the "national revolution" begun in Algiers.

Charles de Gaulle, aloof on his own pinnacle of history, securely buttressed by his own past achievement, no longer seemed to speak the same language as the officers of the new French army, haunted by the specter of Dien Bien Phu and preoccupied with psychological warfare gimmicks and translations of Mao Tse-tung. Thanks to him they were no longer in a state of mutiny. Nor, however, were they wholly reconciled to the republican regime. It was beginning to look as if they might turn out to be its arbiters, not he.

THE medium-term prospect in French politics as 1958 closed was gloomy. Yet some of the noblest and most generous words ever spoken by a French statesman in Algeria had just been broadcast there by General de Gaulle; and the mass of the French people, for all their political apathy, were not totally unaware that the parliamentary democracy it was now fashionable to despise had brought them unprecedented prosperity. The one certainty in French affairs has long been uncertainty. The parliament that gave birth to the *Front populaire* ended its days groveling before Laval and Pétain. Pétain, who would have had a 90 per cent majority had he organized a plebiscite in 1941-42, was an outcast four years later. The 1956 Mollet government, elected to make peace in Algeria, intensified the war there. The new regime, too, may well confound a great many hopes . . . and forebodings.

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VIRGINIA JEWRY IN THE SCHOOL CRISIS

Anti-Semitism and Desegregation

MURRAY FRIEDMAN

RICHMOND

A YOUNG Jewish attorney in a small city in central Virginia was discussing school desegregation with a non-Jewish friend. "I hear that the president of the NAACP is Jewish," remarked the latter. Within twenty-four hours almost everyone in the Jewish community had heard the story, and next day a Jewish defense agency was phoned for information. When the Virginians learned that Arthur B. Spingarn of New York, the NAACP's president, was indeed Jewish, there was grim silence at their end of the line. The knowledge that a Northern Jew was head of the leading organization for Negro rights had shaken the security of this Virginia Jewish community.

The incident illustrates the special problem Southern Jews face today, at a time when American Jewry generally is enjoying an unparalleled prosperity, and discrimination against Jews is being steadily reduced. The Southern Jews' problem stems from the possible consequences of the struggle over desegregation, the region's most severe crisis since Reconstruction. Many Virginia Jews feel "caught in the middle," fearful that any action they may take in the public school controversy will lead to an increase in anti-Semitism. For the Old Dominion is currently a major battleground in the Southern effort to nullify the Supreme Court school decisions. "Massive resistance" was first decreed by Senator Harry Byrd's long-entrenched political machine in 1956. A powerful, organized segregationist movement soon sprang up to mobilize that resistance. Now Virginia's laws have collided with the rulings of Federal courts. Nine public schools in Warren County, Charlottesville, and Norfolk have been closed under state legislation which demands shutdowns when Negro children are enrolled. Early this year, Arlington and Alexandria faced similar battles. Although hastily organized private schools and tutorial systems have been seeking to provide a temporary and makeshift education, almost 13,000 youngsters are presently receiving inadequate schooling or none at all.

There has been considerable opposition to school closings in Virginia, especially in Norfolk, but the position of the state authorities has not changed. In a speech to the Virginia Education Association in Richmond on October 30, Governor J. Lindsay Almond, Jr., said: "The question becomes one of surrender or continued exercise of every legal and honorable means at our command to resist. I shall never willingly witness or become a party to the destruction of education by the mixing of the races in the classrooms of Virginia."

THE Virginia Jewish community numbers about 30,000 and is located primarily in Richmond, in the central part of the state, and in the Tidewater cities of Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Newport News. Richmond and Norfolk have 8,000 and 7,500 Jews respectively, while smaller towns such as Charlottesville have less than 100 each.

The first Jewish settler in Richmond, Isaiah Isaacs, arrived there before the Revolutionary War, and served on the original Common Council with John Marshall. Early Jewish settlers soon identified themselves with Virginia ideals and traditions. Lewis L. Strauss, former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and now Secretary of

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Commerce, is a worthy representative of Virginia's older Jewish families, with their tradition of public service and largely conservative attitudes. But their patterns have been modified since the Eastern European migrations, and particularly since World War II, which brought many second-generation Jews of East European descent to Virginia.

In the larger cities, Jews are active in all the businesses and professions; in the smaller ones, they generally own small businesses. In this well-to-do community, Jewish life is vigorous; in almost every town where Jews have settled, a temple, religious school, or community center is either being built or was recently completed. Until now anti-Semitism has scarcely figured as a problem, and Virginia's Jewish leaders regularly take their turns on planning commissions, in city councils, and as members and presidents of civic organizations.

Despite all these manifestations of security, the Virginia Jew is more keenly aware of the special character his Jewishness gives him than is his co-religionist in the North. He is, of course, far more isolated. Jews in New York, Chicago, or Boston live among a host of religious, ethnic, and racial groups, none of which can claim majority status. But the eighty Jewish families of Danville, Virginia, for example, are an obvious minority in an otherwise homogeneous white Protestant society. Their contacts with Christians are cordial, but rarely extend beyond business hours or community-service efforts.*

These factors help shape Virginia Jews' contradictory attitudes on the race question. Most Jews feel a natural sympathy for the aspirations of the Negroes, whom they see as a minority group now journeying down something like the same road they had to travel. But they are unwilling to set themselves off from the dominant white majority, to which they have made such strenuous efforts to belong. So they generally keep their views to themselves—which causes further uneasiness. As Rudolph M. Lowenstein says in *Christians and Jews,* "as much guilt is felt for unrealized intentions as for deeds actually committed." Because the thoughts they harbor on the race issue differ from those of the majority of their white neighbors, they feel "disloyal" to Southern attitudes and institutions.

Nevertheless, though Virginia Jews accept the idea of desegregation in principle, in practice their viewpoint is not far different from that of the general white population. The Jew frequently owns a grocery, appliance store, dress shop, or other business in the Negro section of town or where the Negro trades. He sees at first hand the poverty, disease, and lower cultural standards that are the lot of the poor Negro. While he understands their causes and acknowledges the responsibility of the white man in creating and perpetuating such conditions, he does not want the sins of the past visited on his own children. As one Norfolk Jewish businessman told me, "When integration comes, you know, our kids won't be going to school with Ralph Bunche's." There is also a small group of Jews who earnestly fear the dangers of "mongrelization" and the encroachments of the Federal government on states rights. But, unlike such states of the Deep South as Mississippi, there is not, to my knowledge, a single Jewish member of the Citizens Councils in Virginia.

The question of desegregation as such, in the minds of Jews, tends to be secondary to the possible effects of race violence on their own place in Southern society. The history of anti-Jewish persecutions tells them that an atmosphere of tension and conflict is not "good for the Jews," and they fear that any Jewish involvement on the side of the Negro—whether by a Jewish Senator from New York, a Jewish defense agency, or one of their own leaders or organizations—will bring reprisals. The degree to which this fear is economic has been exaggerated; one is hard put to it to find a half-dozen Jews in the South (let alone in Virginia) who have been hurt by boycotts resulting from the segregation fight. Rather, Virginia Jews are worried about their community status. Many have spent years work-

*See Harry Golden, "Jew and Gentile in the New South," COMMENTARY, November 1955.

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ing in Community Chest and Red Cross drives and other civic activities because of their natural interest in social improvement and in an effort to show their Christian neighbors that they "belong." If Jews now stand apart from the dominant white group, they fear, they may jeopardize the position and prestige they have worked so hard to secure. Besides, many ask, what good can the Jews do the Negroes? They can only bring hostility down on themselves without, they believe, significantly advancing the Negroes' cause.

VIRGINIA Jewry's new fear of anti-Semitism is legitimate. There have been no bombings in Virginia, but the Old Dominion has become a prime dumping ground for anti-Semitic leaflets, magazines, and pamphlets which pour into the state from the North and West. George Lincoln Rockwell, who has had contacts with two of the men indicted in the Atlanta temple bombing, prints handbills and other literature in his native Arlington for his "National Committee to Free America from Jewish Domination." The theme of this literature, whatever its source, is that desegregation is a Zionist-Communist plot to mongrelize the white race so that the Jews can take over.

Last spring, there was a series of anonymous mailings of racist and anti-Semitic pamphlets and letters to seniors at Washington-Lee and Wakefield High Schools in Arlington.* In recent months, Norfolk and Newport News business and professional people have been receiving hand-written envelopes with Los Angeles postmarks which contain literature published by Frank L. Britton, editor of the rabidly racist *American Nationalist*. ("The time has obviously come," says one such piece, "for white Americans to take action if this Jew-inspired program for compulsory mongrelization is to be defeated.")

On the eve of the opening—or, rather, the closing—of half a dozen junior and senior high schools in Norfolk last fall, an estimated 15,000 pieces of hate literature were distributed door to door in many sections of the city, including those heavily populated by Jews. There had been earlier distributions of such material in smaller quantities. The literature included copies of Conde McGinley's bitterly anti-Semitic *Common Sense*, published in Union, N. J.; reprints by the Norfolk Chapter of the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties of an *Atlantic Monthly* article entitled "Mixed Schools and Mixed Blood"; and copies of a monthly magazine called the *Virginian*.†

The *Virginian* began in 1955 as a four-page segregationist newsletter published by two young men in Newport News. It is now an ably written, slickly produced magazine with a format similar to *Time*. Its message is racial and religious hate, and it attacks organizations like the American Jewish Committee for allegedly leading the "integration conspiracy." Though only 7,000 copies of the *Virginian* are distributed, its very existence at a time of tension is a source of concern.

The organized segregationist movement in Virginia takes three forms. There is the Commonwealth of Virginia Association of Citizens Councils, consisting of units in the Arlington, Brunswick, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Fairfax,** and Peninsula areas, which

*See William Korey and Charlotte Lubin, "Arlington—Another Little Rock?" COMMENTARY, September 1958.

†One of the men distributing this material stopped to discuss flowers with a former German Jewish refugee working in her garden. He left some of the literature with her when he moved on. She became ill when she saw it. The material created so much concern among Norfolk Jews that the Jewish Community Council wrote to its members urging calmness and recounting the steps it had taken.

**The Fairfax Citizens Council has widely distributed a publication called *The Shocking Truth About Northern Virginia's Parent-Teacher Groups*. This publication contains an organization chart showing the "interrelationship" of groups labeled "Fairfax County PTA," "Zionists," "B'nai B'rith," "UNESCO," and the "Southern Regional Council," the latter described as a "Communist Front." *The Shocking Truth* recently turned up at the fall convention of the State Congress of PTA's in Richmond and has been distributed at public meetings of the Richmond Chapter of the Defenders. It was also used in interrogating witnesses by the now defunct Thompson Committee of the Virginia legislature.

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has demonstrated little strength or influence. Another, even smaller, organization is the Seaboard White Citizens Council established by John Kasper in Washington, D.C., and active in Northern Virginia. The handful of fanatics in this group are violently anti-Semitic as well as anti-Negro. In the summer of 1955, Kasper set up a unit in Charlottesville, but its members lost interest when they learned that Kasper had danced with Negro women in New York before he became a racist. However, since the closing last fall of the Lane High School and Venable Elementary School in Charlottesville, this group—or at least its leader, George Cason—has begun to stir. (On October 14, Kasper himself said he planned no activity in Virginia: "I believe that, now that the state government and the Governor have taken such an admirable position in defending the people, we truly have no business coming into Virginia.")

The most important of the organized segregationist groups is the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties. Founded in 1954, it claims some 12,000 members. Unlike the Citizens Councils and Kasper's group, the Defenders have attracted to their ranks prominent business and political leaders—among them Congressman William M. Tuck, a former Governor sometimes mentioned as Byrd's successor, and Congressman Watkins M. Abbitt, a Byrd lieutenant. Virginia Jews are uncomfortably aware that many of their co-workers in local civic undertakings are members of the Defenders.

With the growing school crisis, an increasing preoccupation with Jews and Jewish organizations became discernible among the Defenders. The February-March 1958 issue of their official organ, *Defenders' News and Views*, carried a picture of Thurgood Marshall, NAACP special counsel, receiving a plaque from Kivie Kaplan of Boston, described as co-chairman of the NAACP's Life Membership Committee, and Arthur Spingarn, NAACP president. The caption went on to note, "THE NAACP IS NOT A NEGRO ORGANIZATION and never has been." In more recent issues, the publication has urged its readers to obtain copies of "Our Nordic Race," a pamphlet written by a former field representative of the Defenders in Richmond. The pamphlet's theme is Anglo-Saxon "racial purity," and it concludes with a discussion of the "agitation Jews" who, "in close cooperation with a group of Nordic Race Traitors, are almost wholly responsible for the destructive 'one race, one creed, one color' Marxist campaign that has brought strife and disunity to our country and to the rest of Western civilization."

In spite of these indications of religious bigotry, it would be incorrect to characterize the Defenders as an anti-Semitic movement.* Actually, it is a loosely structured organization composed of diverse people joined together in the common purpose of seeking to maintain segregation. There is no reason to believe, for example, that Congressman Tuck, who has manifested his friendship for Jews by his support of Israel, has ever read *Our Nordic Race* or even knows of its existence.

LAST July 7, an editorial appeared in the Richmond *News Leader* entitled "Anti-Semitism in the South." The South, said the editorial, has honored such outstanding Jews as Bernard Baruch, Admiral Strauss, and, in Civil War days, Judah P. Benjamin. Recent manifestations of anti-Semitism, it went on, must be traced to the activities of the Anti-Defamation League. "By deliberately involving itself in the controversy over school segregation, this branch of B'nai B'rith is identifying all Jewry with the advocacy of compulsory integration." It cited the distribution of "pro-integration materials" by the League's Richmond office to a Charlottesville NAACP workshop as evidence to "embattled whites" of activity that has nothing to do with defamation of Jews. "Such inquiries, once bruited about," the editorial went on, "will be seized upon by the ADL as evidence of anti-Semitic feeling. And having thus stirred up defamation

*The Norfolk Defenders in November adopted a resolution censuring the door-to-door distribution of "hate literature" by one of its members.

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of the Jews, ADL can lustily combat defamation of the Jews. 'Look how much anti-Semitism there is!'" The editorial concluded with an invitation to Jews in the South to get rid of "an organization that foments hostility to Jews."

The *News Leader* is a highly respected newspaper, and its editorial was promptly reprinted elsewhere in the South. Its editor, thirty-eight-year-old James Jack Kilpatrick, is one of the most outspoken and influential segregationist spokesmen. It was he, in a previous series of editorials, who revived the old constitutional doctrine of "interposition" —that a state can block the application to its citizens of Federal laws and court decisions —and sold it to seven state legislatures and, apparently, Governor Orval Faubus of Arkansas.

Kilpatrick's editorial on "anti-Semitism" set off worried phone calls, hurried meetings, and other manifestations of alarm among Richmond Jews. Two views emerged from the Jewish discussions of the editorial. Some agreed with it, and said that Jewish organizations should not involve themselves in the integration struggle. Others read the editorial as a veiled threat of blackmail: if Southern Jews did not silence Jewish agencies working in the field of human relations, "embattled" segregationists would strike back at them. (Many Jews also wondered why Kilpatrick, a Roman Catholic, had not held the specter of anti-Catholicism over the heads of his co-religionists, whose parochial schools are integrated throughout the state.)

The theme first stated publicly by the *News Leader* was quickly picked up by the Arlington Defenders, the most extreme of the Defender chapters, who chose as their target Rabbi Emmet A. Frank of Alexandria, a suburb of Washington. In a Yom Kippur sermon from the pulpit of one-hundred-year-old Beth El Congregation, Rabbi Frank had charged that Senator Byrd and Governors Faubus and Almond had wrought more disunity in the nation in the last few years than U.S. Communists ever had. The Rabbi, sharply critical of Virginia's "massive resistance" laws, had urged Jews not to remain silent to injustice against anyone. There is only one word, he said, to describe the "madness" of segregationists: "Godlessness, or to coin a new synonym—Byrdliness. . . ." The Arlington Defenders demanded that the Jewish community of Northern Virginia openly condemn Rabbi Frank's "slanderous statements and innuendoes." His remarks, they said, "will cause irreparable damage to the hitherto friendly relations between Jews and Christians unless Jewish congregations . . . move quickly to refute and condemn Rabbi Frank. . . ." A number of newspapers joined their attack on Rabbi Frank. Soon afterward, the Unitarian Church in Arlington had to be emptied as a result of a bomb scare just before Rabbi Frank was to occupy the pulpit.

Northern Virginia Jews remained relatively unmoved; they are mostly Federal government employees of Northern origin and, as such, less susceptible to the pressures that trouble Jews in other parts of the state. Elsewhere, there was considerable anxiety. One Jewish group briefly considered—and rejected—a move to have the organization apologize to Senator Byrd. A number of Jews did write to him, declaring that the Rabbi did not speak for them.

THE Kilpatrick and Frank incidents have helped to focus public attention upon the Jewish community. Many white Christians are beginning to look more closely at Jewish neighbors whom they had taken for granted. A Jewish community recently debated whether former Senator Herbert Lehman should be invited to take part in a purely communal affair, since he has been a forthright advocate of civil rights legislation. A Jewish businessman was recently invited to lunch by his dentist, who wanted to know "what the Jews think" about integration, and whether they are the real force "behind" the Negroes. Another Jewish businessman wondered if he should accept a public post if it involved having his picture in the newspaper.

Virginia Jews have joined other Southern Jews in demanding that national Jewish organizations discontinue making public statements on the race issue or the problems

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growing out of this question. Recently, a national Jewish agency called a meeting of Virginia Jewish leaders to ask whether it should file a friend-of-the-court brief in the case of a Northern Virginia printer, a Quaker named David Scull, who had refused to answer questions put to him by a legislative committee because he believed its purpose was to harass pro-integration organizations. The local leaders succeeded in blocking such action, even though most of them recognized the civil liberties issues involved in the case. They argued that Scull was adequately represented by counsel and that intervention by a Jewish agency was therefore unnecessary and might be harmful to Virginia Jews.

In the face of pressures both outside and within the Jewish community, most of the outspoken Jewish integrationists in the South have, since 1954, retreated into positions of silence. In this respect the Jew is no different from the white Protestant liberal or moderate in Virginia—though he has more cause for inaction. Nevertheless, Jews in Virginia do not live in anything resembling a state of terror. Life, in fact, goes on very much the same for most Virginians. Nor have all Jews surrendered to their fears. A number have been active in Norfolk and Charlottesville pressing for the opening of public schools. Rabbi Malcom Stern of Norfolk publicly urged a city referendum on public school closings last spring, while Rabbi Frank continues to air his opposition to massive resistance. Other rabbis are working through ministerial associations and other groups in efforts to head off violence and mediate the racial struggle.

Nor is there evidence of any appreciable rise in anti-Semitism, as distinct from anti-Semitic activity. Recent temple bombings in other parts of the South have horrified Virginians. Early in November, Governor Almond told Milton Friedman, Washington correspondent of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, that elements seeking to promote violence and anti-Semitism "are not friends of the South" and were hurting the states rights cause. A Virginia Congressman mailed a check for $50.00 to a prominent Jew in his community to help pay for the restoration of the "Jewish church" in Atlanta.

But Jews in Virginia remain worried nonetheless. And neither their own silence on the race issue, nor the silence of national Jewish organizations, can end that worry. When a society is experiencing crisis, pressures on its Jews usually increase. Virginia Jews can expect peace only when Virginia finds peace—that is to say, when leaders of the Old Dominion recognize the futility of "massive resistance" and begin to adjust their state's practices to the law of the land.

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A. J. HESCHEL AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE BIBLE

Mystic or Rationalist?

E. LaB. CHERBONNIER

IN THE May 1958 issue of COMMENTARY, Jakob J. Petuchowski makes a provocative analysis of the thought of Abraham Joshua Heschel. One of his conclusions, which it is my present purpose to challenge, ranks Heschel with those Existential theologians who disparage human reason and deny that objective knowledge of God is possible. He draws this conclusion from three facts: first, in common with the Existentialists, Heschel does reject the rationalistic religious philosophy of time-honored Jewish and Christian tradition; second, he bases his thought, not upon the "god of the philosophers," but upon the God of the prophets; and third, as a source of religious knowledge, he subordinates philosophic speculation to the "leap of action." I hope to show that Petuchowski's interpretation of these facts is premature, and that the Biblical philosophy which Heschel develops is intellectually more satisfactory than the conventional theology which Petuchowski defends.

1. *Rejection of traditional rationalism.* Existential philosophers, true to their romantic origins, spurn traditional philosophy for its reliance upon reason. Existential theologians add the further charge that such reliance is positively sinful. Trust in God, they argue, obliges a man to distrust everything else. Confidence in human reason, or even the attempt to prove one's views, appears to them as a kind of intellectual apostasy, a betrayal of "divine revelation" for the mere "wisdom of men." "Divine revelation," they hold, majestically overrides every rule of logic. The mark of faith is therefore to put every rational complaint to silence. A truly Biblical theology, according to them, necessarily issues in contradictions and paradoxes.

Since Heschel, too, regards traditional theology as un-Biblical, he might seem to agree with the Existentialists. Their concurrence, however, is apparent only. For Heschel's understanding of the Bible is at many points directly opposed to theirs. For them, Biblical theology, by definition, contradicts human reason. For Heschel, on the contrary, an irrational theology could not possibly be Biblical.

He arrives at this position by a highly original application of the prophetic concept of idolatry. The prophets declared that any human enterprise not grounded in the will of God was destined ultimately to perish. As applied by Heschel to intellectual endeavor, this principle affirms that any system of thought which denies the Creator-God is likewise doomed to fail; that is, it must inevitably issue in logical absurdities. Where Existentialists imagine that loyalty to the Bible obliges them to transgress the laws of logic, Heschel maintains the opposite. For him, the Biblical conception of God offers the only hope for a truly rational theology.

When he charges traditional religious thought with being un-Biblical, therefore, he by no means disparages its respect for human reason. On the contrary, he declares (in *God in Search of Man*): "Without reason, faith becomes blind. Without reason,

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we would not know how to apply the insights of faith. . . . The rejection of reason is cowardice and betrays a lack of faith."

Heschel charges that traditional theology, precisely because it is not sufficiently Biblical, proves upon analysis to be far less rational than its claims. On this point, his true kinship lies rather with the school of philosophy known as "logical analysis." At the hands of this school, traditional "rationalism" has begun to fly apart at the seams. Its vaunted theological systems, however sincere their authors, owe their apparent coherence to verbal ambiguities and meaningless concepts. Logical analysis has shown that if illogic is what the Existentialist wants, he may be well content with his philosophic heritage. Heschel therefore breaks with tradition, not in the name of irrationalism, but in search of the intellectual integrity to which earlier thinkers aspired in vain.

2. *The God of the prophets.* According to Heschel's diagnosis, the illogic which bedevils traditional theology is due to its un-Biblical conception of God. Instead of the Creator-God of the Bible, it has adopted the "god of the philosophers," known variously as the "ground of being," the "unmoved mover," the "unconditioned," and by other, similar names. Heschel rejects this god, not because he scorns philosophy, but because it has thwarted the philosophic enterprise. His rather daring proposal is that since the philosophers' god has failed to vindicate itself at the bar of reason, the God of the prophets be given a chance.

The principal difference between these two gods is illustrated by one of Petuchowski's criticisms. He objects strongly to the idea that God could have cares, concerns, or even purposes, since He would then be subject, at least in principle, to disappointment and frustration. His is the same reasoning which led the early Christian Church to declare "patripassionism" a heresy, and to insist instead on "divine impassibility." The prophets, on the contrary, speak of the heartache suffered by God (not of necessity, of course, but voluntarily) at the hands of disloyal men. Hosea boldly attributes to God the feelings of a devoted husband toward a faithless wife. Heschel's term for God's willingness to risk disappointment, which he has repeatedly and eloquently emphasized, is "divine pathos."

Is there any ground for regarding "divine impassibility" as rationally superior to "divine pathos"? Traditionally, the impassibility of God has been deduced as a necessary consequence of his unity, as follows: if God were not impassible, if He had feelings, these feelings would have to be directed toward some object other than Himself. According to the traditional definition of God's unity, however, nothing could exist outside Him. For reasons inherited from the philosophers, to appear below, the term "unity" referred only to that which is all-inclusive, universal, limitless. If, therefore, anything did exist outside God, He would not be all-inclusive, and would therefore lack unity. God can therefore have no feelings, for there is nothing beside Him to be the object of His concern. Hence the confident conclusion of traditional theology that if God is one, He must be impassible.

As it stands, the argument is impressive—so impressive that the rare dissident has felt obliged to campaign under the banner of irrationalism. However, he need not have put himself under such a handicap, for the argument rests upon an unexamined premise. It assumes that the word "unity," on which the entire case depends, can have no other meaning. When the Bible speaks of the unity of God, however, it means something entirely different. When the prophet declares, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God," he does not mean the all-inclusive unity of philosophic speculation. His intent is to contrast the unity of God's *personality*, the integrity of His character, with the gods of pagan mythology, who changed character with the ease of a repertory actor.

There was Apollo-the-wolf-slayer, a sun-Apollo, and a swan-Apollo; an Artemis of Ephesus, an Artemis of Macedon, and indeed one for every locality that wanted its own

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Artemis. One god, Serapis, was deliberately compounded of two older deities. Every poet or village priest was free to embellish a god's reputation from his own imagination, until a vast accumulation of chaotic and conflicting characteristics were lumped together under a single proper name. Nor were these protean propensities a source of embarrassment. Rather, they illustrated both the god's elusive, unlimited nature and the consequent impossibility of pinning "him" down to a determinate character. The two heads of Janus symbolize perfectly the ambiguity and inscrutability which the pagan regarded as a mark of divinity.

The prophetic concept of God's unity is a flat contradiction of this notion. Where the deities of paganism are fluid, fickle, schizophrenic, Yahweh is steadfast, constant of purpose, a definite, determinate personality. It has been said that of all the graphic portraits in the Bible, the most vivid and concrete is that of God himself.

Intellectually, of course, the heathen gods were impotent. The inconsistencies surrounding them were exposed to ridicule by the ancient philosophers, until they became an abomination even to civilized pagans. The field was thus narrowed down to two rivals, each with his own kind of unity: on the one hand, the "god of the philosophers," the "one beyond all duality," an all-pervasive "something" which permeates the multiplicity of things in space and time; on the other hand, the God of the prophets, whose unity, in contrast to the fabrications of mythology, consists in continuity of personal identity, but who, unlike the philosopher's god, can create a world outside himself.

The issue between divine impassibility and divine pathos thus boils down to a contest between these two gods. If "God" is all-inclusive, universal, limitless, then "He" is impersonal and without feelings. If, on the other hand, the unity of God means that He has a unified, integrated personality, then He can also, without inconsistency, be a God who *cares*.

Oddly, these two rivals have never met in a pitched battle on the theological front. The explanation lies in an accident of history which gave the philosophers' god a virtual monopoly over the Western mind. When ancient philosophers criticized polytheism, they attributed its manifest confusion, not merely to the kaleidoscopic pagan pantheon, but to the very concept of a personal God. This gratuitous mental association between divine personality and logical inconsistency became so firmly established that the God of the prophets was lumped together with Zeus and Jupiter under the heading of "crude anthropomorphism." Down to the present day, it has been an axiom of Western thought that no god with a proper name can be intellectually respectable. Paul Tillich, for example, confidently assumes that the Biblical conception of God "leads into a fog of absurd imaginations" (*Love, Power, and Justice*), without adducing a single piece of evidence.

Apart from occasional skirmishes and rear-guard action, the "god of the philosophers" has thus succeeded in captivating Jewish as well as Christian theologians. In the present day, however, its rational pretensions have finally been exploded, thanks chiefly to logical analysis. By an inner necessity, to be analyzed below, its votaries are driven inexorably into paradox and self-contradiction.

With the demise of the philosophers' god, the case for divine impassibility collapses, and the way is open for the Biblical God to receive a hearing. This God does not condemn the philosopher's ancient passion for consistent thinking. But He warns that this ambition has been thwarted by intellectual idols, whether by the splintered divinities of polytheism, or, more subtly, by the philosophers' own "unity of unities." A consistent philosophy, like a successful life, would have to derive its unity from the God-who-cares. To refuse to try such a philosophy is to prejudge the case. To the timid, Heschel says, in effect, "If this be anthropomorphism, make the most of it."

3. *The leap of action.* Petuchowski is particularly disturbed by Heschel's answer to the question: how is knowledge of God pos-

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sible? Rejecting the traditional answer, Heschel develops a Biblical alternative, which he calls the "leap of action." Petuchowski sees no important difference between this concept and the Existentialist "leap of faith," with its frank appeal to irrational impulse. He cites as evidence Heschel's poetic style and his frequent reference to an "intuition of the ineffable." Once again, however, Heschel breaks with tradition, not in defiance of reason, but in search of a more rational alternative.

THE conventional avenue to the knowledge of God acquires an appearance of rationality because it does take seriously the laws of logic. In fact, it conceives God himself in the image of these laws. In every act of thinking, the argument runs, there is a tacit assumption that the processes of thought correspond in some way to reality itself. Otherwise, all reasoning would be in vain. Hence the conclusion, to borrow Hegel's words: "The real is the rational, and the rational is the real." The royal road to the knowledge of God must therefore consist in philosophic contemplation of the structures and principles of thought. The hierarchy of rational concepts becomes the ladder of ascent to God.

Within this hierarchy, the more universal concept enjoys priority over the less universal: the genus over the species, and the species over its individual members. Seeking the clue to reality in this scale of logical precedence, traditional philosophy concluded that the logically prior is also "more real." Nor is this conclusion without a measure of plausibility: when an individual dies, the species still exists; if a whole species becomes extinct, the genus endures. Accordingly, the most permanent entity, and hence the "most real," corresponds to the most universal and inclusive of all concepts, commonly known as "being," the "absolute," the "unconditioned," and already encountered above as the philosophers' god. Just as all the logical consequences of a first premise are contained implicitly within it, so this deified abstraction is said to contain within itself the essence of all that exists in space and time.

Based as it is upon the laws of thought, this method of religious knowledge appears eminently rational. Its practitioners, however, have overlooked a crucial distinction. It is one thing to grant, as Heschel does, that logic is normative for human thinking. It is quite another, however, to translate logical priority into precedence in the scale of reality. To do this is in itself neither rational nor irrational. It merely amounts to the proposal: "Let us inquire whether such a conception of reality will provide the foundation for a consistent system of thought, or whether, on the contrary, it will issue in a bundle of contradictions."

Heschel is ready with the prophetic reply: to erect a philosophy upon a false conception of God is intellectual idolatry. He therefore confidently predicts that this philosophers' god, though created in the image of logic, will drive its devotees into illogic. To prove the point, one need only carry the foregoing chain of reasoning a step further:

If God is all-inclusive, then "He" must embrace not only truth, but falsehood as well. Philosophers with the tenacity to stick to this god therefore have no alternative but to deny, in the last analysis, the distinction between true and false. From ancient times to the present, they have taught an ultimate "coincidence of opposites," a primordial unity which somehow resolves all contradictions (including their own). Having begun in the service of logic, they emerge with a plenary indulgence for every inconsistency. When, therefore, an Existentialist like Heidegger declares (in *Existence and Being*) that "untruth must derive from the essence of truth," he is merely echoing the conclusion of traditional rationalists. The only difference is that he is less embarrassed by it than they.

An appropriate illustration may be drawn from Petuchowski's article itself. On the one hand, he emphasizes the irreconcilable difference between the impassible "god of the philosophers" and the Biblical God-who-cares. On the other hand, however, he de-

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mands that these mutually exclusive conceptions be reconciled in a "higher unity of rational thought and mystical insight." In the name of "traditional rationalism," Petuchowski resorts to the very tactics with which he charges Heschel: the appeal to mystical intuition in defiance of the laws of logic.

When Heschel speaks of intuitive insight, he by no means seeks to override logic. He draws a careful distinction between the *source* of an idea and its *truth*. No idea can be either verified or refuted by an appeal to its source alone. In mathematics or physics, for example, hypotheses are often born in a flash of intuition. Some turn out to be true, and others false. Religious intuitions, too, are a possible source of knowledge. As in other disciplines, however, they must be validated by established criteria of truth. Heschel (*God in Search of Man*) is quite clear on this point: "There are false as there are true prophets; there are false as there are true religious doctrines. If a religion claims to be true, it is under obligation to offer a criterion for its validity either in terms of ideas or in terms of events." The role of intuition in Heschel's theology is carefully restricted. It is a source of ideas to be tested, never a self-authenticating substitute for truth.

The same is true of his poetic gifts. Because poetry does appeal to the emotions, some philosophers, following Aristotle, have resolutely eliminated every trace of graciousness from their writing. Lest reason be swayed by poetic charm, they employ a style which only with charity can be called prosaic. Heschel, however, following the pre-Socratics and Plato, takes a different view. Just as philosophy deals with life as a whole, so their style is directed to the whole man, emotions as well as reason. Not that aesthetic charm is any guarantee of truth. No amount of eloquence can rectify a falsehood. For purposes of testing its truth-claim, any poetic statement can and should be analyzed into cut-and-dried, logical propositions. Heschel attributes to his reader the maturity to do this. The logician alone, however, is not only half a man; he is, according to Heschel, half a philosopher as well. For the truth which the philosopher seeks is better served by beauty and reason together, than by reason alone.

As for Heschel's frequent references to "the ineffable," it, too, is limited to a non-cognitive role in his thought. There is, after all, something ineffable about most human experience, a residue that eludes every attempt at description. If this is so, then a philosophy which takes account of the fact will be truer than one which pretends that in principle all human experience can be reduced without loss to explicit formulation. Heschel's emphasis on "the ineffable" is a reminder that we live in a universe full of mystery, not a glorified machine whose secrets can all be unlocked by science. But he never uses "the ineffable" to escape criticism or to clinch an argument.

Because "ineffable" is a favorite word in the writings of mysticism, Petuchowski concludes that Heschel must be a mystic. The main point of *God in Search of Man,* however, is the contrast between Biblical and mystical conceptions of God. For the mystic, the personal "God" is finally transcended by the impersonal, impassible, ineffable, unknowable abyss of "being." For the Bible, on the contrary, the mysteries of life testify to the majesty of their Creator. Behind them all stands, not "Mystery" with a capital "M," but the concrete person of Yahweh: "The clear, unambiguous will of God is not lower but higher than the mystery."

If God were the "fathomless abyss" of mystical intuition, then "He" might be approached through philosophic contemplation. For at the top of the ladder of rationalistic abstraction, the philosopher discovers the same all-inclusive, undifferentiated unity which the mystic worships. Petuchowski, while rejecting such a god, continues to endorse this method of religious knowledge. Heschel rejects the method along with its discredited god, and develops a method more suitable to the God of the prophets.

If, as the Bible maintains, God is a Person, then He can be known analogously to

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the way in which other persons are known. Such knowledge does not consist entirely of descriptive data about observable facts; it is an understanding of another's will, his character, the orientation of his heart. It is the kind of knowledge which a star witness brings to the courtroom, or which a famous man's secretary puts in his memoirs. They know something which the rest of us do not. Or rather, what they know is the consequence of *whom* they know. This direct acquaintance with another person, which gives their testimony its special significance, is also the kind of knowledge men may have of God.

The prerequisite of such knowledge is a volitional encounter. The will of each party must impinge upon the will of the other. If the encounter is hostile, then their knowledge of each other remains minimal. It is no accident, therefore, that villains are notoriously inscrutable. And conversely, the more two wills and purposes overlap, the greater the degree of mutual knowledge. In an athletic event, to take a common example, the opposing players become better acquainted when competition is sporting than when it is cutthroat. Inter-personal knowledge is the by-product of good will.

The prerequisite of religious knowledge, accordingly, is to realign one's will with God's. This is what Heschel calls the "leap of action." Outwardly (*halachah*), one performs the will of God as inferred from the Torah. Inwardly (*kavanah*), one performs specific acts (*mitzvot*) as though they really are well pleasing to God. By so doing, one steps into a dimension of knowledge which otherwise remains closed: *And hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him* (I John 2:3, 4).

Inter-personal knowledge, like science, is experimental. It is obtained and tested "en route," by *doing*. Instead of a means to decision, it is the *consequence* of decision. The reputation of a famous surgeon, for example, though universally credited, can be *confirmed* only by those who have chosen to be his patients. And conversely, if a doctor's skill has been maligned, he can be vindicated only by those who choose nevertheless to trust him.

God's reputation is mixed. The prophets have declared his promise of healing to the nations, and of salvation to the individual. But they are outnumbered by his detractors. The issue can be settled only by a "leap of action." He who ventures to walk in the ways of the Lord discovers something which the uncommitted observer can never know: whether God really is the sort of person to whom the prophets bear witness.

Because the "leap of action" requires a man to take sides, to commit his allegiance, Petuchowski suspects that it violates scientific neutrality. The scientist is "neutral," however, only in the sense that he refuses to prejudge a case. In order to achieve this kind of neutrality, he *must* take sides. He must ally himself *for* truth and *against* error. Until he does so, he remains in willful ignorance. There is thus a scientific, as well as a theological, "leap of action."

Because religious knowledge depends upon private experience, Petuchowski doubts that it can be objective. Objectivity, however, is not the product of some other kind of experience. There is no other kind. Objective knowledge, as distinct from mere subjective feeling, requires that the personal experience be *communicable*. Only then can its validity be tested. The researcher emerges from his laboratory, not to deliver Olympian pronouncements, but to invite his colleagues to come and see for themselves.

Existential theologians deny that religious experience can be communicated. Their "leap of faith" is frankly subjective. In the terminology of Martin Buber, "I-Thou" experience cannot be translated into the language of "I-it." Biblical religion, however, does not fit Buber's definition. Heschel accordingly deplores the Existentialist's "tabu on the idea of objective validity." Knowledge of the Biblical God is not esoteric, but can be communicated in the same way as knowledge of another person. For Buber,

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prophetic utterance is simply a symbolic gesture toward "the ineffable." For Heschel, on the contrary, it contains literal propositions about God. The prophet, like the researcher, invites all men to perform an experiment: *O taste and see, that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him* (Ps. 34:8).

THERE may be passages in Heschel's writings that do support Petuchowski's interpretation. Most philosophers slip occasionally into phraseology which contradicts their own premises. The aim of constructive discussion, however, is not to convict a writer of occasional missteps, but to evaluate his central thesis.

Before Heschel's philosophy can be tested, it must first be recognized for what it is: a claimant to the rational title which traditional religious thought, under the scrutiny of modern criticism, has been obliged to relinquish. Theologians can scarcely be expected to adjust immediately to the collapse of conventional theology. Some still cling to it as the only alternative to chaos. Others have reacted with a desperate irrationalism. A few, however, have joined Heschel in the search for a third alternative, one which, in Heschel's words, has required them to "unthink many thoughts." By comparison with traditional theology, they rely on a different way of knowing, a different subject matter —in fact, a different God.

Heschel has developed the philosophy of the Bible out of the prophetic faith that only this God can deliver men from intellectual, as well as practical, frustration. He asks no quarter from the logician. He stakes his reputation on the proposition that a truly rational theology must be based, not upon the "unmoved mover," but upon the God of the prophets.

SEEK HAVEN

CHAYYM ZELDIS

WE HAD it, we had it—the violet hour,
We had the singed twilight for our own;
The lamps were headless and the years unformed,
And we had the silence in our hands
Like a seer's ball.

Today's face turns where there isn't any wall,
Today's heart yearns where the grass is dry;
There are shadows here that have forsaken masters,
And leaves of bronze that don't touch each other,
And light—without ecstacy.

Appeal to black, numb trees and bloodless snow,
That are unseeing and beyond our clime;
Appeal to the file-edged tongue of sky.
Then swallow soul's silent poison,
And seek haven in a hutch of rhyme.

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LAST OF THE WAR CRIMINALS

The Mystery of Erich Koch

GERALD REITLINGER

FURTIVELY presented in stray paragraphs of the world press during October and November 1958, an assiduous student might find traces of a weird, sacrificial, and Kafka-like Polish trial. The defendant was a solitary German war criminal who had been immured in Warsaw's Mokotow prison for nearly nine years, and whose crimes were at least fourteen years old. A querulous invalid of sixty-two, wild-eyed and haggard, the subject bore little resemblance to the large, pink, boyish, and truculent face of the Erich Koch who had been Hitler's tyrant for the Ukraine. Only the abundant swept-back hair and the Hitler mustache, now running to grass, conveyed something of that former hero.

Sixteen years ago, when the Germans still held most of the Soviet Ukraine, Koch was a name to frighten children with. It meant the most outright die-hard Nazi, a man who could hardly talk about any subject at all without mentioning shooting, a man for whom there were only conquerors and sub-humans, a man whose utterances became so notorious that even Stalin noticed them. Koch, Stalin is alleged to have said, reminded the Soviet citizen every day of what he had to fight against.[1]

Ironically, however, the Russian authorities have never demanded Koch's body—the same Russians who once tried a German SS general in the morning and hanged him in the afternoon. At the beginning of 1950, when the British occupation authorities reluctantly extradited Koch to Poland, the Russians staked no claim for him. A state trial of the former tyrant to take place in Kiev or in Rowné, his former capital, would have been only fitting. To the Poles of Warsaw Koch was, it is true, a war criminal of some consequence, who had misgoverned the annexed *Kommissariat* of Bialystok, but to the Ukrainians Koch was much more than that. He was the epitome of two years of repression, resistance, and anarchy, unequaled even in Ukrainian history. In a dozen Ukrainian cities the trial of Erich Koch would have been a joyous occasion, but that begged the question. Did those in power want any joyous occasion for the Ukraine? Stalin was said never to have forgotten the fact that his terrible campaign to collectivize Ukrainian agriculture in the early 30's had ended in some degree of compromise. And, as for Stalin's present successor, the former secretary of the Communist party for the Ukraine, Nikita Khrushchev, his attitude toward the subjects and victims of Erich Koch was perhaps no different. In 1944, shortly after the complete reconquest of the Ukraine from the Germans, Khrushchev is reported to have used these words:[2]

> If one asks the "Ukrainian German" nationalists how many German occupiers they destroyed, how many German formations they wiped out, how many bridges they blew up in order to prevent the aggressors from transporting arms for subjugating and annihilating the Ukrainian people, they can make no reply.

One may hazard a guess that in 1949, when Erich Koch was discovered to be among the living, the memory of the Ukrainian nationalists who had fought Germans and Russians alike was too recent for a Ukrainian state trial to be desirable. So the Russians

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made no efforts to obtain Koch's extradition. That, however, does not explain the reluctance of the Poles to try their man. Koch based his defense in October 1958 on a document which he had prepared eight years ago and which he called "Political Sketch of My Struggle." "It was made to sound," wrote the correspondent of the London *Times*, "like the personal file of a good Communist party member." Rumors of these literary labors of Erich Koch had reached the German press in 1950. It was even said that the Polish government had released him in order to write them. If that was not precisely true, why was Koch enabled to delay his trial so long? Even the Polish indictment, occupying several volumes of typescript, had been prepared as far back as 1955. Perhaps we shall never know the answer.

ERICH KOCH was born in the Ruhr town of Wuppertal in 1896, the son of a worker in a synthetic coffee factory. Koch told the Warsaw court that he had been converted to revolutionary socialism at the age of twenty, when he shared a dug-out in the trenches of the Russian front with a soldier called Schmitz. He did not add that he had after the armistice joined the ultra-nationalist, anti-Communist *Freikorps Rossbach* and that this had decided his political future far more than "Father Schmitz." Koch served in the *Freikorps* with a fellow townsman, the Nazi proto-martyr Leo Schlageter. Together they took part in the storming of the Annaburg Fortress, which was occupied by Polish infiltrators in 1921. Together they took part in sabotaging the French military occupants of the Ruhr in 1923, and Koch was one of the pallbearers at Schlageter's great public funeral after he had been shot by a French firing squad.[3]

Already after his return from Silesia in 1921 Koch had joined the National Socialist party—as party member number 90, he liked later to recall. He was not yet a close associate of Hitler, whom he only got to know well in 1926 when his anti-Weimar Republic activities lost him his livelihood as a booking clerk on the State Railways. To Koch, disillusioned with the mere unreasoning chauvinism of the *Freikorps* movement, Hitler could still offer the bait of a nationalism that was at the same time socialist. While Hitler had been in Landsberg prison, the socialist Strasser brothers had ousted the Russian-born conservative mystic, Alfred Rosenberg, from the leadership of the party. Koch's passionate devotion to the Strassers lay behind his remorseless antagonism to Rosenberg in later years, when he governed the Ukraine for Rosenberg's Ministry. Of that devotion the following well-attested incident provides a good example.

In 1925 the Nazi party was split by the Strassers' demand that the German princes should be expropriated. Hitler made an illogical stand on behalf of the princes, partly because he was keeping himself going on an allowance of 1,500 marks a month from a divorced duchess. So illogical was it that Hitler found only two supporters, his tame economist, Gottfried Feder, and the future founder of the "Labor Front," Robert Ley. At a meeting in Hanover in November 1925, Goebbels jumped to his feet and actually demanded the expulsion of the "petty bourgeois," Adolf Hitler, from the party. But in the following February Hitler contrived to manipulate a party meeting at Bamburg, where the Strasser influence was outvoted. Goebbels recanted publicly and the expropriation of the princes was removed from the party program. But Erich Koch, who had attended both meetings, was unassuaged. He wrote a newspaper article denouncing Goebbels as a traitor to the National Socialist revolution, a man who had played the part of Talleyrand. Till the end of his days Goebbels remained an enemy of Erich Koch.[4]

Hitler, however, had not lost his use for radicals. The days of his obsession for power through *Legalitaet*, of his break with the Strasser brothers, were far ahead. In 1928 he made Koch *Gauleiter*, or party leader, for the province of East Prussia. As Hitler explained fourteen years later, the great East Prussian landlords had joined the party

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in the belief that they could manipulate it, so long as it was represented by some nincompoop. "When I put Koch on their backs as Gauleiter, they soon realized that this was a different proposition and then they immediately joined the camp of the opponents of the National Socialist party."[5]

East Prussia, separated from Germany by a Polish corridor to the sea, was the key post in the campaign against the *Diktat* of Versailles, and Hitler's choice of a hero of the Annaburg fight was not made casually. Koch had no love of Poland, but he was far from sharing Hitler's contempt of the Slavs, which was an aftermath of a gutter-snipe life in the Vienna of the declining Hapsburg monarchy. Koenigsberg, the seat of Koch's power, was not a mixed city, like Danzig or Posen, but an almost purely German city with a tradition of tolerance. In the days of Immanuel Kant, Koenigsberg's provincial university culture had been shared by Poles and Russians. As governor of the Ukraine, Koch was to fill the best posts in his administration with Koenigsberg tradesmen and borough councillors, grotesque Stendhalian figures who had acquired importance as courtiers of a country-town big shot. Like Koch himself, they were expected to talk about the master race and the primitive peoples, but this was far from being the language of their childhood. For Koch, the guardian of Nazi doctrine on its extreme eastern borders, remained an ardent admirer of the Soviet Union long after Hitler's seizure of power, when he became a monarch without a parliament in East Prussia.

In 1934 a Breslau firm brought out in Koch's name a book called *Aufbau im Osten*. It was a typical Nazi production, printed in a Gothic black-letter type of exceptionally Teutonic aspect and consisting mainly of excerpts from Koch's speeches in praise of the "Fuehrer" and all his works. But among the honey there is a small essay, "The Orient of German Youth." A literary ghost, one Weber-Krohse, was said to have written it, but the views purported to be Koch's and they were remarkable. The youth of Germany were bidden to look away from the decadent capitalist West and to join their fortunes with the virile classless youth of Russia. They were to share the great land spaces of the East, not (as Koch was to advocate after 1941) in the role of armed settlers chasing Kaffirs or Red Indians, but in the role of comrades and brother pioneers.

It was a dangerous assertion of a view which was the very reverse of the principles of *Mein Kampf*, and which savored of "Strasserism." Within a few weeks of the publication of *Aufbau im Osten*, Gregor Strasser and many other Nazi old-believers were murdered in the purge of Roehm and his followers. Koch was spared, perhaps because in the previous December he had endeared himself to Roehm's opponents by an officious piece of tale-telling on behalf of Himmler's criminal investigator.[6] In the "political sketch" read out at Koch's trial, there is a singularly different story. Shortly before the murders, Koch had had a secret meeting with Gregor Strasser at Merano, where he had tried to persuade him to form an opposition party against Hitler. Koch was, therefore, high on the list of victims. He was fortunately hidden in Koenigsberg by Ludwig Mueller, Hitler's Evangelical Reich Bishop. In the meantime, Goering dismissed Koch from his office of *Oberpraesident* in East Prussia and raided his home and office. Before Koch was reinstated by Hitler personally, there was an attempt to murder him in a Berlin restaurant.

That Koch had feared for his life at this time can be confirmed from another source. In a vivid conversation in the compartment of a Mitropa sleeping car in April 1936, Koch told Hans Gisevius, a former member of the Gestapo, that the purge of June 1934 was not the end of the killings. "They would be coming for him any day now, he said. And by 'they' he did not mean only Himmler's henchmen; he was also thinking of the Fuehrer."[7]

Yet Koch's pro-Soviet sympathies did not end with *Aufbau im Osten*. He maintained a friendship with Theodor Oberlaender, a Koenigsberg professor of economics who re-

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cruited a battalion of Soviet deserters during the war and was dismissed from the army for an attack on German methods in Russia. He is today the Minister for Refugee Affairs in Bonn. Barely two months after the Roehm killings, in August 1934, Oberlaender undertook a mission to Moscow with the blessing of Erich Koch. He had an interview with Radek and Bukharin, at which both sides deplored the hostile drift of their respective governments, and Karl Radek (a Galician Jew and once a member of the German Social-Democratic party) made the lapidary remark, "There are some fine lads in the SA and SS."[8]

As governor of the Ukraine in 1941, one of Koch's first acts was to rid himself of the embarrassing presence of Oberlaender. Hitler had not endorsed Koch's appointment in any spirit of forgetfulness, and no one was better aware of it than Koch. In 1939 he had admitted to Carl Burckhardt, the League of Nations commissioner in Danzig, that he welcomed the Moscow pact as one who had been almost a Communist.[9] But Hitler, who knew of certain softnesses in the old party fighter, had found the post for him where these softnesses were least likely to show. A poacher, as he used to remark, made the best gamekeeper. Once at least Hitler made a sly dig at Koch's past. On September 7, 1942, when the position of a German governor for the Ukraine seemed assured for life, Hitler declaimed by the log fire at his headquarters in the presence of some honored guests who included Erich Koch. Observing that the youth of ancient Greece went into battle grouped round their teachers, Hitler remarked: "I should very much like to see *our* youth led into battle by their teachers." At this point his eye must surely have fallen on the putative author of "The Orient of German Youth."[10]

This was a side of Koch's nature which could not fail to commend itself to those who came to be known as the Resistance Circle. Ulrich von Hassell noted sadly, in February 1942, that Koch had joined the ranks of the extremists who talked of making the Ukraine a land of the Goths. Yet he had once been thought "half-way decent."[11] Another member of the conservative group, Hjalmar Schacht, had some clashes with the stormy Gauleiter of East Prussia in the days when he was Minister for Economic Affairs, yet he remained friendly with him. There was an odd occasion at the *Ostmesse* celebrations at Koenigsberg in August 1935, when Himmler's local police chief, *Obergruppenfuehrer* Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski, clanked noisily out of the hall while Schacht was speaking. At the Nuremberg trial, Bach-Zelewski explained that it was because he could not tolerate Schacht's praise of Erich Koch, whose corrupt practices he had investigated and exposed. But Schacht says that Himmler's man walked out on account of his criticism of the persecution of the Jews. Koch, who was sitting next to Schacht, patted him on the shoulder and gave him the admonition once conveyed to Martin Luther: "Little monk, little monk, you are traveling a hard road."[12]

If these two versions of the same incident depict two totally different Erich Kochs, it can only be said that both existed. Whether Koch was utterly corrupt remains an open question. The former railway clerk from Wuppertal liked to think of himself as a financier, an economist, and an agricultural expert. It is to be noticed that Rosenberg, who had more cause to hate Koch than anyone, did not accuse him of personal peculation even in his death-cell memoirs. Rosenberg's charge against Koch is rather one of boasting of things that he had not performed: of negotiating a trade agreement with Brazil, which was in reality the work of a member of Rosenberg's own Foreign Political Office; of pretending to be the first Gauleiter to abolish unemployment; of fathering another man's book; of creating a plan for rearing pigs, which Koch accused Goering's staff of sabotaging when he ruled the Ukraine—and so on.[13]

Gisevius makes these qualities of Erich Koch much more intelligible and picturesque. According to him, Koch's projects commended themselves to Hitler and Goering because he did not bore them with

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statistics, but made them sound novel and impressive. Yet Koch himself was swindled by a fake alchemist and by some Rumanian Jewish grain dealers.[14] If half the ludicrous projects which Gisevius ascribes to Koch were ever seriously entertained, then one is forced to conclude that the Nazi leaders were not just brutally savage, but childishly silly as well. Neither conclusion, however, is wholly true. That so much confidence was placed in the half-fanatical, half-leg-pulling Koch sprang from the nature of Hitler's system of rule. Hitler could not replace the old salaried officials and he dared not dispense with the generals and admirals, but he dearly loved an amateur or two from the ranks of "the revolution," a Gottfried Feder or an Erich Koch, to work alongside the professionals and to give him contradictory advice. Eventually one of these amateurs, Martin Bormann, who possessed no talent beyond recording everything that was said, became the master of Hitler's soul.

THE eighteen-day war in Poland in September 1939 increased Koch's standing rather than his territory. It left East Prussia no longer severed from the Reich, and among the red-gabled roofs of Koenigsberg the Gauleiter could breathe more freely. Koch was not yet an Oriental satrap. Much of the Polish Corridor had gone to the *Gau* of Danzig-West Prussia. The rest of Poland was partitioned and allotted half to the German *Gaus* of Silesia and Warthegau, and half to a German "Government-General," a sort of colonial administration. Koch gained only Memel from Lithuania and the districts of Mlawa and Ciechanow from Poland. Nevertheless there were now a fair number of Poles among his subjects, and Koch was consequently made local deputy to Himmler as chief of the Office for Strengthening German Nationhood (RKFDV). This meant that he was responsible for Germanizing suitable Poles. The unsuitable Poles he had to remove, together with the Jews, to Hans Frank's Government-General, a leper colony and universal dustbin. Koch resented this task, not from aversion to pushing people about, but from jealousy and contempt for Himmler. He had grown in stature since 1936, and the fear of another purge of the Old Guard no longer prevented him from opposing Himmler. In the first place Koch succeeded in getting the resettlement job out of the hands of his old enemy, von dem Bach-Zelewski; and in the second place he neglected to carry it through, even threatening to boot Professor Meyer-Hetling, Himmler's pet *Akademiker,* out of East Prussia. For more than two years Koch delayed the preparation of the *Volksliste,* Himmler's elaborate categories for the subjects of annexed territory. Koch would neither decide who were the Poles who had to go, nor would he find room for the Germans from Lithuania who had been expelled under the Moscow protocols. Himmler wanted to settle some of them in the Ciechanow district, which Koch, however, reserved for one of his pre-war projects, the "Koch foundation" for East Prussian land settlement.[15] The squabble with Himmler's resettlement officials went on till long after Koch had added the Ukraine to his empire. In the Ukraine Koch used the same tactics, neglecting to provide for the native-born *Volksdeutsche,* simply because Himmler was in charge of the arrangements.

When on June 22, 1941, Hitler attacked Russia, the memory of Koch's "Orient of German Youth" was not so strong as the general impression that Koch had made himself a little monarch, who would stand no interference from anyone. It was because Koch was an "absolutely ruthless person" that Alfred Rosenberg, the future Minister for the Eastern Territories, recommended him to Hitler as a possible *Reichskommissar* for Great Russia, the kernel land of Muscovy, which, as Rosenberg explained to his staff two days before the invasion, would have to be moved back toward the Urals, "a task requiring the strongest personalities."[16]

Rosenberg, the author of *The Myth of the Twentieth Century,* may have reckoned that Moscow was so far from Berlin that Koch would be out of the way of doing harm or simply that the Wehrmacht would not reach

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Moscow. But on July 16, on Hitler's special train at Angerburg, Rosenberg was horrified to find Goering ganging heavily for Koch's appointment as Reichskommissar for the Ukraine in place of his own nominee, Fritz Sauckel, the Gauleiter of Thuringia. Rosenberg protested, but all had been pre-arranged between Hitler and Goering. Before the conference ended, Hitler read out his list of civil governors for Russia, and in it Koch appeared as governor of the Ukraine.[17]

For Rosenberg this was the destruction of a dream. In 1923 his newspaper, *Der Voelkische Beobachter,* had been financed by the Hetman Skoropadsky, who in 1918 had been briefly and ineffectively backed by Austro-German arms as the president of an independent Ukraine. From Skoropadsky and other counter-revolutionaries, Rosenberg had acquired the ideological blank cartridges of the defeated White armies: passionate anti-Semitism and a terror of Freemasonry and international finance. By June 1941, however, Rosenberg's Ukrainian patriots had provided him with something more up-to-date: the belief that only a revived Ukrainian nation could prevent the rebirth of the Soviet multi-nation state, the hot-house of world revolution. Soon the Germans would be in Kiev and Kharkov, as they had been in 1918. The Ukrainian language must therefore be revived as a medium of education and a regional culture must be discovered at all costs.

To Koch this was plain nonsense. If he needed Russian political leaders, he preferred them to be Bolsheviks, while Ukrainian collaboration was the one subject of all subjects on which he could not afford to misinterpret Hitler. Ribbentrop, Rosenberg, and Canaris wanted a Ukrainian alliance; the High Command wanted at least their friendship; but Hitler, unaware how far pro-German collaboration had already gone, believed the Ukrainians to be too treacherous and too divided among themselves to deserve a minute's encouragement. In 1918 the Ukrainians had failed to support the Austro-German forces against the Bolsheviks. Their unity had dissolved, even before the Germans had capitulated in the West, and they had killed a German field marshal; that was enough for Hitler.

To Koch the course of action was plain. He could rid himself of the interference of Rosenberg, and perhaps even of Himmler and Goering, if he supported Hitler against all dissident voices. He would forget his old political sympathies in order to reign like a satrap. It was easy, fatally easy. With him were the old party fighters, the most intransigent *Bonzes* and Gauleiters, who had been brought up for the past twenty years and more on the doctrine that the Germans were a master race, destined to rule the East. What Koch failed to reckon with—what no opportunist as blatant as himself could have imagined—was the chance that Hitler might fail to win the expected three-months blitzkrieg; that Hitler himself might be forced to make concessions; and that the conception of the subhuman Slav, fit only for subjection or slavery, might be abandoned. So Koch remained a professional blood-drinker long after the fashion had ceased. But certain illusions about him must be dispelled. He was never truly the tyrant of the Ukraine. At best, and that only between September 1942 and February 1943, Koch's territory embraced half the former Soviet Ukrainian Republic, a dominion over some seventeen million people. The Wehrmacht controlled the rest.[18] Moreover, Koch contrived to rule at the same time as Gauleiter of East Prussia, to which Bialystok was added in July 1941. He spent more time in Koenigsberg and Berlin than in Rowné, his Ukrainian capital. From his assumption of office on August 28, 1941, till the loss of Rowné in February 1944, it is unlikely that Koch spent altogether more than six months in the Ukraine.

Then again, German government in the Ukraine was not entirely the embodiment of the views expressed by Koch. Of his six *Generalkommissars,* two criticized him openly and favored a more liberal policy: Leyser at Zhitomir and Frauenfeld at Melitopol. Furthermore large areas never came under

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German rule at all, owing to the lack of protection troops. After the first winter of the campaign almost the whole northern fringe of the Ukraine, the belt of scrubland, swamp, and heath which separates the steppes from the forests of White Russia and Great Russia, stayed in the hands of Red Army partisans. In the early summer of 1943 a Russian partisan force under Major-General Sidor Kovpak raided through the outer rim of the Reichskommissariat and penetrated 700 miles to the Carpathians, one of the most astonishing and least publicized feats of Allied soldiers in the entire war. In Volhynia, the westernmost Kommissariat, there was also an area which was almost continuously occupied by nationalist partisans, fighting against *both* sides.

With so many reservations, it is hard to say whether Koch governed the Ukraine. Even his capital, Rowné, had belonged to Poland till September 1939, and was partly inhabited by Poles. Koch would have liked a capital at Kiev, but dropped the matter when Hitler ruled that this would encourage the idea of a historic Ukrainian state.[19] It must, however, be conceded that while Koch was Reichskommissar the Ukrainians suffered the bitterest repression in the whole of their history, a history which included Stalin's collectivization campaign. The key to this repression was the removal of over two million Ukrainians as slave workers to Germany and the removal of five and a half million tons of wheat. Yet even in these matters Koch was only an executive officer for Sauckel, the plenipotentiary for labor recruitment, and for Goering, the head of the "Four Year Plan" administration.

In putting his staff almost entirely at the disposal of these organizations, the truculent Gauleiter of East Prussia acted with surprising meekness, in fact no differently from the military government officers in the Wehrmacht's part of the Ukraine. The only difference was that Koch defended his action with vulgar and scandalous speeches, while the soldiers pretended they only did such things under protest. On one occasion Rosenberg wrote to Hitler that Koch should not compare himself with the British in India, since the British kept silent about their harshness and only boasted of the blessings they conferred on the Indians. Rosenberg had missed the point: Koch was compelled to boast about excesses in the Ukraine in order that Hitler might give him the sole credit for them.[20]

Apart from the exactions in men and wheat, which were decided over his head, Koch worked hard on his own to restrict the concessions which Rosenberg and even Hitler were prepared to grant the Ukraine. He opposed, in some cases effectively, the partial de-collectivization decree of the Rosenberg ministry, which Hitler finally sanctioned in February 1942. As to the total restoration of private land-ownership which Rosenberg decreed in June 1943, Koch had hardly any need to resist, for the Red Army gave the Germans no time to carry it out. In these matters, contempt for Rosenberg went hand in hand with Koch's old admiration for the Soviet system. Indirectly, the same held true for Koch's opposition to Rosenberg's attempts to reopen the universities and technical high schools. Koch would permit nothing beyond the elementary stage. In June 1943, he wrote to Hitler that, since he had "lost half a million Jews" in the Ukraine, one could not even get a pair of boots mended. "Which is more important? That I train Ukrainians to make boots or that I send them to high school so that they can build up the Ukrainian state?"[21] The point in Koch's complaint was that Rosenberg had not ceased to regard Ukrainian higher education as a means for creating a powerful anti-Soviet nationality. But in Rosenberg's theory Koch saw only a revival of the White Armies of Denikin and Wrangel, with all their bankrupt philosophy, including the lunatic "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" which Rosenberg had once solemnly printed.

Had Moscow been occupied by Hitler in 1941 and had Koch been appointed Reichskommissar of Great Russia, as Rosen-

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berg had once proposed, I suspect that Koch would have fought all comers to perpetuate the Soviet system. Unlike Hitler, when he spoke of subhumans Koch meant Ukrainians and not Russians. Where he had to employ large numbers of native local government officials, as for instance in the city administration of Kiev, he preferred to employ Russians. But in spite of all Koch's bloodcurdling talk, the German administration could not dispense with the Ukrainian nationalists. Compared with the wholesale slaughter of suspected White Russian partisans, the racial murder of the Jews, and the callous "loss" of two million prisoners of war, the Germans treated the armed Ukrainian bands with uncustomary restraint. In September 1941, when Koch took over the first three Generalkommissariats, it was already too late to extinguish movements which German military government staffs had encouraged. Political involvements remained to the end, and the current picture of a Ukraine groaning under a German administration, down to the lowest levels, is nowhere near the complicated reality.

BEFORE the invasion of Poland, the *Abwehr* (German Intelligence Corps) had sought the collaboration of a highly esteemed leader of the Ukrainian political groups in Galicia, then under Polish rule. But, realizing that a less academic figure than that of Andrei Melnyk would be needed, the Abwehr released a certain Captain Stepan Bandera from a Warsaw prison. Soon the moderates under Melnyk and the militants under Bandera split and became the dissident Ukrainian parties, OUN-M and OUN-B, the latter being far less inclined to cooperate with the Germans. The cost of a couple of Ukrainian sabotage battalions for the Abwehr was therefore very high, nothing less than an out-and-out declaration of Ukrainian independence in Lvov.

Somewhat sheepishly the security police of the SS intervened and abolished the "Ukrainian State." Bandera and other OUN-B leaders were interned in concentration camps, but in the meantime considerable numbers from both OUN groups penetrated the Soviet Ukraine and were given responsible posts by the German military rear-area commanders. By July 16, 1941, Hitler had decided that Galicia was a political hotbed which must be kept rigorously separated from the great bulk of Ukrainians living in former Soviet territory. Lvov was therefore added to the Government-General of Hans Frank. This, however, was no simplification of the problem, because Frank favored the Ukrainians against their enemies, the Poles, thereby enabling both OUN groups to retain a base of operations against Koch's Reichskommissariat. At the beginning of 1942, when Kiev was handed over by the Wehrmacht to Erich Koch, the city swarmed with these infiltrators. In February the first Ukrainian mayor of Kiev was executed by the Generalkommissar.[22] Nevertheless Kiev and even cities further east were filled with OUN agents from Galicia right up until the German evacuation.

Freedom for political activities in the big Ukrainian cities was an unlooked-for result of the peculiar German order of priorities. Wheat, grown in the Ukraine, was acquired by German agencies primarily to feed the army. After this, the export quotas for Germany had to be satisfied. The Ukrainian cities were not in the picture, because, under the terms of Goering's notorious "Green Folder," non-food-producing populations were to be ignored. The Soviet distribution system was scrapped, and the cities were left to get along as best they could on the black market. Their internal affairs were of so little consequence that they could run an unofficial and parallel administration to deal with the illicit feeding system without much intervention from the Germans. Believing that his standing with Hitler depended solely on his deliveries of food and slaves, Koch ignored the dangers of this situation. Thus, at a critical moment in his fortunes, he presented Goebbels, as Gauleiter for Berlin, with a trainload of Ukrainian butter. During the Stalingrad crisis, when the Wehrmacht commandeered all the

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trains, he pressed loads of food on the soldiers going home on leave.[23] Such small gestures concealed the real truth, namely that Koch had lost his bristling independence. He had become the underling of Goering and Sauckel.

IN ONE respect alone Koch retained his self-assertiveness, and that was in his relations with Rosenberg. The Eastern Ministry sent innumerable directions from Berlin through a "Political Department" which bristled with experts. Koch had decided to ignore them even before he had been appointed. He would be a real Reichskommissar, serving immediately under Hitler, like Frank in Poland, Terboven in Norway, and Seyss-Inquart in Holland. On August 25, 1941, the day of his appointment, Koch left the doors of the Ministry with this parting shot: "I want only one advance payment. That advance will be returned to this office in a year's time and then we shall be quits for ever." It was the first shot in a battle of accusations and protests which Koch had the poor satisfaction of winning only when his kingdom was slipping back into the hands of the Red Army.[24]

The combatants offered a colorful contrast. Rosenberg, a Baltic German, was scared of violence, a bohemian, an artist, a peddler of ideas with enough talent to cover a peanut. Koch was the child of an industrial town, remote from feudalism or snobbery, cunning, bumptious, worshiping toughness and realism, an early Arnold Bennett character in a vulgar tie. At first the honors were with Rosenberg. On December 19, 1941, Hitler promised him not to receive Koch except in his presence, a promise he failed to keep. Lammers, the Chancellery chief, was instructed to tell Koch that his claim to act under Hitler's direct orders was untenable. Koch thereupon descended on the Ukraine, which he had avoided throughout the winter, and enlivened the months of March and April 1942 with addresses to his staff, instructing them how to treat a "nigger people." Rosenberg sent his censures in writing. In May 1942, when he next had an interview with Hitler, he was too scared to bring the matter up, but sent a circular to Koch's subordinates, criticizing the tone of Koch's instructions. Rosenberg warned them in particular against the use of corporal punishment.[25] Koch complained to Hitler that this circular had made his position intolerable.

The flood of memoranda and countermemoranda which followed left Hitler unmoved, and possibly he would not have intervened but for the interference of Martin Bormann, who came into the tearoom at Hitler's headquarters at Vinnitsa on the night of July 22, 1942, after a long drive in the Ukrainian countryside. Hitler was goaded by Bormann's expatiation on the fruitfulness of Ukrainian families. He embarked on a dissertation on the future of the Ukraine, picturing the inhabitants huddled into kraals outside the handsome new German towns, deprived of education or health services (beyond the pretty notion that the Jews might be encouraged to sell them contraceptives). For that sort of thing no centralization was needed, no decisions at ministry level. It would be sufficient if minor German officials conveyed their orders to the Ukrainian headmen, provided that no Ukrainian civil service was thereby created.[26]

Not only did Bormann have the precious words recorded, but he worked the whole thing up into a "Fuehrer directive" which was placed in Rosenberg's hands next day under the title, "Eight Principles for the Eastern Territories." Rosenberg was petrified with fear that Hitler was going to confirm the eight principles in the form of a decree, but, being more Russian than German, he had the wisdom not to answer. Somewhat surprisingly the next communication from Fuehrer headquarters was a brief from Hitler, appointing Rosenberg sole delegate in matters of policy in the former Soviet Union. So Rosenberg had now to write a letter of gratitude and what else could he do but praise Bormann's eight principles?[27] To his protesting staff this seemed a complete renunciation of all the pious homilies Rosenberg had dispatched to Koch, but their fears were groundless. Rosenberg made no

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changes of policy and even permitted a ghostly health service to continue its functions in the Ukraine. Moreover, armed with the new brief from Hitler, he issued another circular on August 21, forbidding Koch's officials to have any direct communication with Hitler's headquarters.

For Koch, Bormann's heavy guns had misfired, while on August 6 he had the further mortification of a public snub from his patron, Goering. "Your miserable half million workers! How many has Sauckel brought? Nearly two millions. Where did he get the others?"[28] Koch was under fire from both sides, but he pursued his course. On October 28, 1942, he decreed the closing of the Ukrainian technical high schools. Since Koch cited the terms of a "Fuehrer order," applicable to Germany, Rosenberg could not challenge him outright, but he sent a moral homily to which Koch reacted quicker than usual, since he was no further away than the Adlon Bar in Berlin. On December 15, he abused Rosenberg to his face in his own office. He also threatened to smash the nose of the chief of Rosenberg's cultural section, using an old street-fighter's weapon, a heavily jeweled ring.[29]

Henceforward Koch forbade his officials to visit the Ministry and he banned Ministry officials from entry into his Reichskommissariat. On February 23, 1943, Rosenberg issued a decree reopening the technical schools. Koch intercepted it, altered it, and instructed his staff to get themselves rubber stamps with the words "inessential to the war effort" for dealing with further Ministry instructions.[30] After calling in another Rosenberg directive, which urged caution in press-ganging Ukrainian labor, Koch appealed to Hitler on March 16 in a memorandum which occupied fifty-two foolscap pages of typescript.[31] There now ensued a tremendous battle of words, both sides memorializing every item in the dispute since the beginning. For good measure Rosenberg added an accusation, which he was not successful in sustaining, that Koch had massacred the inhabitants of a huge forest domain near Rowné in order that his guests might hunt.

It was not till May 19, 1943, that Hitler consented to receive Rosenberg and Koch at his East Prussian headquarters. Although Hitler decided none of the issues, he showed in a long dissertation that Koch had acted according to his own views. He proposed that Rosenberg should visit the Ukraine forthwith and that in future there should be regular consultations between him and Koch. Rosenberg was to confine his directions to basic principles and not send detailed instructions. The written decision, which did not reach Rosenberg until a month later, was even less favorable to him. Koch was to have the right to submit counter-proposals, and if Rosenberg contested them, the arbiters were to be Bormann and Lammers who were Koch's best friends.[32] Neither Koch nor Rosenberg knew this during Rosenberg's tour of the Ukraine. Uncertain of his position, Koch dogged Rosenberg's footsteps, watching him and scaring him, while the Field Marshals, Manstein and von Kleist, the Generalkommissars, Leyser and Frauenfeld, aired their bitter complaints. Rosenberg returned so shattered that he invited a strong man from the SS to take over the Political Department so as to keep Koch in order. The strong man was Himmler's military chief of staff, General Gottlob Berger. But Berger took on the task only in order to secure the armed deserters from the Red Army and their German-controlled national committees for the SS. He was content to leave Koch alone.

Thus the month of July 1943 found Koch completely victorious. Insofar as his staff controlled any towns, he stopped the opening of schools. Insofar as they controlled any agricultural districts, he stopped the restoration of the land to private ownership, but that was not very far. On June 17, Rosenberg learned from Leyser that in Zhitomir Kommissariat the partisans collected 60 per cent of the harvest and even supplied the peasants with seed. Soon there was an end to that too.[33] In August the Red Army retook Kharkov, in September Poltava and

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the Donetz basin, in October everything up to the Dnieper, in November Kiev. By the beginning of February 1944, the Reichskommissariat Ukraine was extinct.

Early in September orders went out to destroy all livestock, shelter, and plant as the armies retreated. Koch's contribution to the crisis was to obtain a ruling from Bormann and Lammers that his civil government officials should remain in charge to the last moment, even when the enemy positions were only ten kilometers away. Consequently there were conflicts between soldiers and civilians and a great deal of looting of the produce which could no longer be shipped back to Germany. Koch, however, was not deserted by his peculiar genius for avoiding dangerous and responsible posts. There is no evidence that he visited the Ukraine after September 1943.

From this point until July 1944, Koch kept out of the limelight. A testy note from Lammers, in September 1943, suggests that Hitler may have had enough of him.[34] But Koch still possessed a kingdom in East Prussia and in the Generalkommissariat of Bialystok. He had added this considerable portion of pre-war Poland to his estates in order to boast that he ruled from the Baltic to the Black Sea. But at the Warsaw trial in October 1958 Koch was armed with a better excuse. The Bialystok province was mostly forest, forest so primeval that such ancient Teutonic beasts as the aurochs still haunted it. The "Reich Hunter," Hermann Goering, wanted it as a nature reserve and Rosenberg had agreed to a proposal to dump all its inhabitants in the Ukraine. So Koch had gone to his Fuehrer. Hitler had proposed that Bialystok be incorporated in the General Government of Hans Frank, but that, Koch argued, meant that Goering would get his way. So Hitler agreed that Koch should have Bialystok, an awkward gift as it turned out. In July 1944, neither Goering nor the aurochs roamed the Bialystok forests—but the Red Army, who were about to invade East Prussia, the first part of the homeland to become a war area. A man of consequence once more, Koch was back in Hitler's graces—particularly after the failure of the 1944 bomb plot. When Stauffenberg brought his bomb into the Rastenburg map room, Russian gunfire was already audible, a Russian patrol had crossed the Reich border, and, as Defense Commissioner, Koch had begun the digging of trenches and the recruitment of a home guard.

Koch had never tolerated generals in his private kingdom. In 1934 he had quarreled with von Brauchitsch, who was then *Wehrkreis* commander in Koenigsberg, and Hitler had refused to listen to Brauchitsch. Now, when General Model of the Central Army Group criticized Koch's amateurish defense lines, and when Model's successor, Reinhardt, accused Koch of stealing his munition trains for the *Volkssturm,* Hitler would not hear a word against Koch. Moreover, Koch was rewarded with another Reichskommissariat. In August Reichskommissar Lohse had decamped from the Baltic states, when the Red Army secured a momentary foothold west of Riga. On September 8 Keitel instructed the High Command that Koch alone was responsible for securing and utilizing the local resources of the Baltic states. Koch threatened that he would apply the well-tested methods which he had used in the Ukraine. He would make short work of the *Ostidioten* who wanted to grant Baltic autonomy.[35] It was another meaningless threat. On October 10 the fast shrinking Baltic pocket was finally severed from the Reich. There was no shipping to secure and utilize the local resources, and Koch took good care not to present himself in this dangerous, friendless place. Even Koenigsberg was now a front-line town, and Koch lived almost permanently in the deep shelter of the Adlon Hotel in Berlin.

That the next Russian offensive must bring the Red Army to the Vistula, or even the Oder, was not a thought which worried Koch. Faithful to the Bormann-Hitler principle that defeat was undiscussable and evacuation measures treasonable, Koch did nothing. Yet the ruling of Sep-

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tember 1943 still made him the supreme authority ten kilometers from the front. Even the Wehrmacht's heavy guns were in his jurisdiction, and the new chief of staff, Guderian, complained that not a tree could be felled nor a trench dug without coming into conflict with the Gauleiter's officials.[36] No instructions were issued for the evacuation of civilians, and on January 17, when the Red Army poured into East Prussia through a 50-mile gap, there was no time to get them out. Other Russian armored divisions fanned out along the course of the Vistula between Warsaw and Danzig, leaving Hossbach's Fourth Army isolated among the Masurian lakes. Hitler wanted to create another Stalingrad at Loetzen, but Hossbach ignored the order and, with the support of Reinhardt, moved his 350,000 men back to the Vistula, abandoning all East Prussia except for the Koenigsberg peninsula.

As the sacred soil passed out of German hands for generations, perhaps forever, Hossbach piously blew up the hideous Hindenburg monument on the battlefield of Tannenberg. On the 26th Hitler dismissed Reinhardt and Hossbach, even threatening them with court-martial as traitors in the pay of the Moscow "Free Germany" Committee—though there could not have been a more Nazi general than Reinhardt. Koch boasted that it was he who had ruined the two generals and he would do the same to all who abandoned a yard of East Prussia.[37] He promised Hitler that he would defend the remains of East Prussia with the *Volkssturm* alone if necessary. Nevertheless, on the grounds that he was Defense Commissioner for East Prussia and not Koenigsberg, Koch took good care to move his headquarters to Pillau which was on the open sea. At Pillau an icebreaking ship was in constant readiness for him, as well as an escape route to the Vistula front along the Frische Nehrung spit.

Within a few days Koch was back in Berlin. The Russians had taken Pillau and the 130,000 inhabitants of Koenigsberg were cut off from the escape route. But at the end of February the besieged garrison made a bold sortie, retaking Pillau, to which Koch returned in a fast motorboat. According to Goebbels, Koch used his brief reappearance at the danger spot only to dismiss the gallant civilian Kreisleiter of Koenigsberg. For another six weeks he fluctuated between Pillau and Berlin. In the meantime conditions in Koenigsberg became inconceivable. On April 14, Koch had his last audience with Hitler in the Reich Chancellery bunker. Hitler raved about Koch's faithful eyes. He received the old party fighter, now looking distinctly fly-blown, with tears and embraces. "*Ja, Ja, es ist wieder Kampfzeit.*" Goebbels wanted to be sick.[38]

Next day Koch told Hitler that Major-General Lasch, the commander of the Koenigsberg garrison, was preparing to capitulate. Hitler at once had Lasch condemned to death *in absentia* by a summary court-martial, arresting his family as hostages. From Neutief on the Frische Nehrung, Koch telegraphed that again he had been right. Fully informed of his condemnation, Lasch had surrendered Koenigsberg to General Vassilevsky. Lasch had also allowed the Russians to publish a statement in which he denounced Hitler—a statement which did not save him from an imprisonment lasting till October 1955. Goebbels was not deceived by Koch's play-acting. "So ends the heroic fight of a German town," he told von Oven, "in squalor and in the baseness of party intrigue."[39] Today the German town is no more. Koenigsberg has become Kaliningrad.

THREE hundred miles behind the foremost Russian positions, the Frische Nehrung spit held out until the capitulation of Germany, but it held out without Erich Koch. On April 23, he slipped out of Pillau in the icebreaker "Ostpreussen." No refugees were taken aboard, but a large staff and quantities of furniture and loot. The "Ostpreussen" made west for Hela, only 30 miles across the bight. This seagirt stronghold still blocked the harbor of Danzig, which had fallen to the Russians on March 28, but it was no place for Erich Koch—though he con-

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tinued to send Hitler ship telegrams, addressed from Hela.

The "Ostpreussen" cruised in leisurely fashion past Ruegen and Bornholm and along the Swedish coast, where on April 30 Koch learned of Hitler's death. He put in at Copenhagen, but put to sea again when he heard that the British were about to take over. Koch slipped ashore discreetly at Flensburg, evading the hostile court of Admiral Doenitz under the false identity of Major Rolf Berger.[40] The "Major" lived quietly in Hamburg until May 1949, when someone denounced him to the British occupation authorities.

Koch had little reason to complain of the attitude of his captors. The British Control Commission invoked an agreement, according to which the time limit for extradition claims had long passed. A legal battle was fought with the Polish government till January 1950, when finally Koch was removed from Düsseldorf prison to Warsaw. Koch nevertheless produced a story at his trial which was well in keeping with his taste for the extravagant: the British had delivered him out of spite, while refusing to hand over SS leaders who were the real culprits, because he had been so successful in the 30's in attacking the British monopoly of soap and margarine in Germany.

Not even the most brazen postwar Nazi scribes have put in a good word for Erich Koch or challenged the verdict that his last role was treacherous and contemptible. That those who had still greater cause to hate him should have delayed prosecution for nearly nine years invites political speculations, but may there not be another reason which is not political at all? Koch could charm and fascinate the most inaccessible of dictators. Compared with that achievement, out-talking the Ministry of Justice of an Iron Curtain country may be quite easy.

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3. Robert G. L. Waite, *Vanguard of Nazism*, p. 237.
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5. *Hitler's Table Talk* (English edition), p. 533.
6. Rudolf Diels, *Lucifer ante Portas*, p. 290.
7. Hans Gisevius, *To the Bitter End*, p. 208.
8. Gustav Hilger, *The Incompatible Allies*, p. 268.
9. Schwerin von Krosigk, *Es geschah im Deutschland*, pp. 164-5.
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12. *My First Seventy-Six Years*, p. 349.
13. Alfred Rosenberg, *Letzte Aufzeichnungen*, p. 213.
14. Hans Gisevius, *op. cit.*, p. 207.
15. Robert L. Koehl, *RKFDV* (1958), pp. 121, 187.
16. Peter Kleist, *op. cit.*, p. 141. Nuremberg Document, PS 1019.
17. Nuremberg Document L221. Full text in Arnold Toynbee, *Hitler's Europe*, Vol. II, pp. 230-6.
18. *Hitler's Europe*, Vol. I, p. 634, footnote 2.
19. Otto Braeutigam, *Ueberblick ueber die besetzten Ostgebiete*, p. 19.
20. Nuremberg Document, PS 045.
21. Nuremberg Document, PS 1384.
22. John A. Armstrong, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-7.
23. Hans Baur, *Ich Flog Maechtige der Erde*, p. 222.
24. The battle can be pieced together from a number of printed documents in the Nuremberg trial series. There is only one consecutive account, and that by no means complete, in Alexander Dallin, *German Rule in Russia*. Koch's remark, recorded by one of Rosenberg's officials, will be found in Juergen Thorwald, *Wen sie verderben wollen*, p. 42.
25. Alexander Dallin, *op. cit.*, pp. 166-8.
26. *Hitler's Table Talk*, pp. 587-590.
27. Nuremberg Document, PS 042.
28. Nuremberg Document, USSR 170.
29. Nuremberg Document, PS 192. Thorwald, *Wen sie verderben wollen*, pp. 179-180.
30. Nuremberg Document, PS 1130.
31. Nuremberg Document, PS 192.
32. Alexander Dallin, *op. cit.*, p. 162.
33. Nuremberg Document, PS 2650.
34. Alexander Dallin, *op. cit.*, p. 363.
35. Peter Kleist, *op. cit.*, p. 192.
36. Heinz Guderian, *Erinnerungen eines Soldaten*, p. 352.
37. Juergen Thorwald, *Es begann an der Weichsel*, pp. 152-5, 165.
38. Wilfrid von Oven, *Mit Goebbels bis zum Ende*, pp. 262, 295 (Vol. II).
39. *Ibid.* See also Juergen Thorwald, *Es begann an der Weichsel*, pp. 210-217.
40. Juergen Thorwald, *Es begann an der Weichsel*, pp. 217-223.

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APPLES

A Story

NORMA STAHL

LARRY, awaking, heard his chin stubble rasp the satin ribbon of their white blanket.

"Oh, you lucky bum!" he said to himself, as a small doubt hit him. "Oh, you no-good lucky bum!" Finnegan had said to him on Larry's wedding day. Larry said it to himself now as, stifling the doubt, he stretched between fine percale sheeting and turned to his wife.

To where his wife should have been.

"Where is she?" he asked himself. She was always beside him, nuzzling close till he was ready to get up, just as she always waited for him at night, no matter how late he sat over his books. And last night had been a late night. He had sat in his study, reading and re-reading what he had already written of his thesis, asking himself if he would ever be able to finish.

Larry twisted his neck to see the gold wedding-present clock on the bed table. A little past one. The blinds were drawn, but he could see enough gray light to know it was a cold, gloomy day, a wonderful afternoon for sleeping. He remembered now that his father was coming for dinner, and after that, Finnegan. But that was later.

"Then where is she?" he asked himself again. At the same moment he was telling himself, "Don't panic. For God's sake, why the panic?" It came to him at times when the unreasonable panic rose up that on the reverse of the coin of his lucky-gold-piece life was engraved a shipwreck. Somebody, someday, might flip that coin.

He strained to hear sounds. He flung back the blanket and in his pajama bottoms only, he went down the short hall, through the dining room and to the kitchen.

He watched her first from the doorway. Tall, long-legged, slender—the baby hardly showed yet—Penny stood at the table, furiously whipping some grey stuff in a bowl. He admired all over again those long, fine legs, that silky blond hair that she let go just any which way. All of her body was fine and long-boned and tennis-y, even to the elegant stoop of her shoulders. ("Wings, Penny!" he had heard her mother say, on the very day Penny and he were married.) Now and then dabs of the grey stuff flew out of the bowl and spattered her shorts.

"Penny?" he said. "You didn't wake me."

She continued whipping for a moment in silence. Then she turned her young, unsure face to him and answered, "I got up early." She picked up their cat, Maxine, and rubbing her face against Max's ear, she continued, "I'm making things your father likes." She moved away for him to see.

Larry peered into the dishes and pots to see the careful replicas, like wax-works in a museum, that Penny was making of the contents of the old-time meal. On a plate, chopped liver in a mound surrounded by slices of white radish. In the huge pot, yellow soup, bubbling and breaking like a turbulent sea. Upon its surface, round matzo-meal balls, yellow and smooth, bouncing like buoys; a faggot of greens, neatly tied with white thread, sailed and steamed and gave off its crisp, acrid odor. Deep in the pot, the long thick slices of breast meat, each with three flat marrow bones protruding from their slippery envelopes of gristle.

"Well, it's perfect, wonderful," Larry said. "It smells like home, which is—you know—good and bad. But you've done it all wonderfully. Where did you learn it?"

"From a book," Penny answered. "I had to get a book. You know. There was no one I could ask."

He put his arm around her and made her sit down, because she hadn't yet had breakfast. He took her answer as a reference to the death of her parents, and also as a sad little complaint about other things too.

NORMA STAHL was born in New York City and educated at Mount Holyoke and Columbia University, where she obtained a master's degree in English literature. This is her first published story.

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Six months before, suddenly and nightmarishly, Penny's parents had been killed in an auto crash. For a year before that—part of it was over him—Penny and her mother had not communicated. And with her father the connection had been mainly money, because he was a man who converted love obligations into money ones, and discharging those, cleared the books. Their death had left Penny and him rich enough so that he need never finish his thesis and begin to teach, except that if he didn't live out his old dream, what would he do?

Penny did her best to feel grief. What wasn't grief was guilt and confusion, and they worked as well, bringing tears to the mourning, and a sadness and sense of loss thereafter.

"Penny," he said. "Penny Benny."

He made coffee for them and poured it into two big mugs. He toasted coffee cake and buttered it and put it on a big plate between them. Penny held her mug in her two hands and sipped from it dreamily. Though she was tall, a little taller than he, she huddled down small when she sat.

"Eat, Penny dear," he said. "Eat coffee cake. Get fat."

"For the kill?" she asked absent-mindedly.

He said nothing. His wife was given to extravagant sayings and doings. He felt satisfied when she took a piece of coffee cake and began licking the butter off the top.

"Let him come live with us," she said.

"I'd ask him, Pen, you know," he answered, "but what's the good?"

"He'd want to come."

"Maybe. Maybe he would, if I could ask him a right way, a welcoming way. I'm willing to do whatever duty I owe to him, but I can't put in feeling if I don't feel it, can I?"

"Just ask him."

"But I know him. He won't come that way."

"He looks so lost every time he leaves," Penny said.

"I know," Larry answered.

"He looks so frail."

"I know."

"I wonder, how does he shop for food and make his meals?"

"You don't have to wonder. When my mother was alive, she had to yell to him to get out of the pots." Larry said this with more assurance than he felt. His father had been a different man then.

As suddenly as it began, the conversation stopped.

They dressed and settled in the living room. It was Sunday. The *Times* lay on the table, a challenge to Larry's nerve and will. He picked three sections to read in order of his duty as he saw it: first, "News of the Week"—caring for a world that might reciprocate by blowing him up; second, books—his profession, if he had one; and last, music—his love.

Larry offered Penny a piece of the paper, but she refused. She had settled awkwardly on the sofa. Though her belly hardly showed anything, she had already started to move with the deliberateness of a pregnant woman. In her lap was Max, who at the first sign of disturbance was ready to plunge off. She gave her a few soothing strokes, and Max purred.

The "News" was full of horrors. But the cat purred, good if disturbing smells came from the kitchen, the room was filled with Brahms, his wife sat content. . . . Or did she? He looked up, just in time.

"Cigarette, cigarette!" he yelled wildly, pointing to where her cigarette had toppled to the cushion from the ash tray balanced on the sofa arm.

Penny thrashed the cushion and poured coffee from her cup on it. Larry went to examine it. Not quite burnt through, but a brown scar on the beige-and-yellow tweed within the brown coffee stain.

He couldn't help then looking back at the coffee table at older scars there, and thinking of chips or mars or scars throughout the house.

"Penny," he said, "Penny, for God's sake, don't be tearing up the playground."

"I don't do it on purpose," she said.

He put his hand on her head. "Of course you don't. Any more than I care about it on purpose."

She smiled at him then. "You didn't fall so far from that tree."

He smiled back. "We are what we are?" he asked.

"But we're changing every minute?" she asked back.

"Falling from the tree is easy; it's rolling away that's hard," Larry concluded, and

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with it finished their ceremony of repentance, their restatement of their situation in life.

"If I hadn't met you then, I could have met you now," Larry said. He was referring to the night he had dropped his ping-pong paddle at the USO and dashed across the room yelling, "Listen, your skirt's on fire!"

It had been her expression he had noticed first. He liked it. A kind of naked look about her face, despite a childish stubborn set to the mouth that he could see too. But naked the way the forehead was smoothed tight back, the way all the skin of her face lay tight against its bones, something the way a dog looks when it lays its ears flat—naive and scared and hopeful. She had been staring ahead, not talking to anyone, one hand lying across the edge of her lap, holding a cigarette. He had kept one eye on her—she seemed to be falling into a daydream. And then he thought he saw the live end of her cigarette nestle into the fold of her tweed skirt. It wasn't exactly on fire, of course, but there was a fair-sized scorch in it that, as she worried it with her fingernail, became a hole.

At first, without much interest she had looked down, poured a little coke into her lap, and thanked him. As he continued to stare, she had added, "Don't worry, it was bound to happen. It always does. I guess I like things to be worn and torn." Then she had looked at him with sudden clear interest and said, "Your forehead has wrinkles. That's nice."

He had sat down and that very night had begun to tell Penny about himself, his mother, his father, the store. About how his mother and father had told him that the apple doesn't fall far from the tree, and how he had vowed it would. That night and the nights after, as he said much and Penny said little, he learned, out of the corner of his eye, about her too. Not only did she burn, she cut, scratched, and bumped herself, and never remembered how or when. She also lost purses, containing a good deal of money. The naked watchful look was not for that, but instead for the many interrupted scenes where the mother and father had stood silent and glaring, the unspoken words hanging in the air like blimps.

He had told Penny how he had had so much energy as a boy that he could not sit still. He sometimes even read or wrote standing up. When he ate supper, he used to shake one leg under the table until his father and mother, who wanted a deathlike stillness in which to ease their aching bones that they said felt broken, declared, "Did you ever see? Such a crazy kid? Stop with the shaking!" But he was like a runner, warming up, ready for the sprint, to be gone.

He had tried to tell his father about his dreams. "Not for me, Papa. Not the store. Something I'll be happy with. Here the son doesn't have to follow the father. The son can do new things. . . ."

Larry knew he should keep the excitement out of his voice. He should be grave, to show he understood life was hard. But he got swept up. And his father was a choleric man. With a way of moving his glance furiously up and down the length of a person as if to include every bit, from crown to toe, in his contempt.

"Did the parents struggle so the son could be a failure?" he shouted. "Who gives up a store for a nothing—a maybe?"

And his mother, who had it in for him because he dated girls who weren't Jewish (he had to admit they had a fatal attraction for him—the pale, quiet ones with freckles and sandy eyebrows and a shy admiration for the way he talked, incessantly, about his work), said, "You think if you read your eyes out and run around till all hours you'll stop being my son and Abe Goldstein's son? Never! It was already too late twenty years ago. You should have talked to God before you were born."

When everything else lost its sting they even—anything to stop his flight—sacrificed the image of their own self-esteem. "The apple doesn't fall far from the tree," they said wearily.

It seemed that all during his growing up, for one reason or another, his parents were angry with him. And he too, mixed with his pity, felt angry and choked.

Knowing he should leave, but unable to get the power, he had sweated it out at home, working in the store days, at night grinding his way through a dreary B.A., a dreary M.A., and at last starting on his Ph.D. This was to be the dove that would bring him back in its mouth a piece of the

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green growing life at some university far from the East Bronx.

But before that could happen, the army had taken him. Then he had met and married Penny (she had put her hand on his sleeve once after they kissed good night and said in her whispery voice, "I want to be new too. But not alone. I can't make it alone.") and they had gone to live in a good but not flashy apartment house in downtown Manhattan where he was to finish—finally finish—his thesis.

They had seen his parents infrequently. Penny had seen hers not at all since the wedding—though there the excuse was that they lived in Cleveland. When Larry's mother was dying, his father did not summon him until she was far gone, and her mind in confusion. She took Larry's hand and said, "Promise me. . . . Promise me you'll find a nice girl and settle down," even though Penny was there the whole time.

"Put Max in the kitchen," Larry said to Penny now. It was getting near the time—it was always near evening—when the cat's digestive system went to pieces.

Ignoring that, Penny said, "You don't have to be afraid of your father any more, if that's it. A television set, a warm room, and some food is all he needs now. He's changed."

It was true. Although it never made the elderly stranger seem less a stranger, he could see that his father had changed.

After his mother died, his father had shut up shop. He had taken Larry aside and said, "I have to be a different person now. The world has changed. I spent too many years in the store—in the dark."

He then sold out the store, moved to a smaller apartment in the Bronx, and bought a television set.

"Look, look how people live," was all his cry.

He saw with his own eyes that people had more rooms in their houses than they could live in. That they burned lights for the joy of warm, beautiful light, that they ate from uncracked plates on clean white tablecloths. He peered inside the set at "Person-to-Person," his neck stretched forward, his mouth open as if he would take a bite out of the fruit that was just standing around in a bowl, getting rotten.

He learned that people who read and wrote books and talked about them were not sunk in the river with their feet in cement, but were actually paid. Scholars and scientists became his heroes. "Brilliant mind!" he said, whenever one appeared. All the same, he squinted in perplexity, searching the screen. Where was the aggressiveness, the loud voice, the smooth brag of the success? Vanished. Gone from this new, well-lighted world. He hesitated, confusion peeping out from under his wrinkled, straining lids. Then he gave up, leaned back, and pronounced the benediction, "Brilliant mind."

Penny had told Larry his father was proud of him. But Larry thought rather that his father looked upon him as a straggler who had fallen to the rear of his own parade. "Larry!" his father would say, tearing his eyes from the screen for a moment. "You read more than him. Why don't you get up there?"

The new and the modern was wonderful. His father was determined not to be a back number, and to go along with all of it. When Penny burned a cigarette hole, threw out a piece of sterling with the garbage, or when the cat, whose diarrhea was chronic, did it on the sofa pillow, Larry's father sat stunned for a moment. Then he leaned back, gave himself up to the new and the modern and nodding his head, dumbly smiled.

"I'm nervous," Penny said. "What are you thinking about? The past? Then you won't ask him."

"I would if I could," said Larry. "If I can I will. Can I help it if I don't feel it yet? If I just don't feel it?"

"All right," said Penny. "But please. I can't bear to see him walk out into the cold another night without some offer from you."

"I'll try. I'll try. I'll try," said Larry.

The doorbell rang. Penny gave him one full glance before she went to the door.

The next moment Larry's father stood before him. Not, as he still thought of him from his childhood—a heavy, powerful man. But as he had been for years now, shrunken, frail. The soft yellow sports shirt was buttoned at his throat and he had made a careful knot in his navy-blue-and-red flowered tie—a big, loose, slippery knot, and the collar and the knot fell away from his wasting

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neck. He stood rubbing his hands uncertainly, searching for a joke.

"Well, professor, did you get your TV contract yet?"

"Not yet, Papa, not yet. Sit down."

"I'll put everything on the table," Penny said. "We'll eat soon." She hurried out to the kitchen.

His father sat down on the sofa. In the old days he would certainly have first shooed off the cat that was curled in a deep cup on the pillow beside him. The dog he had brought to the store to catch rats when Larry was a boy he had forbidden Larry to take home. And the dog had—so Larry had thought—died of loneliness and starvation in the first few months. But now his father sat with his hands in his lap, meekly sharing the sofa with the cat.

Larry reached for the whiskey bottle. "A little *schnapps,* Papa?"

"All right. I will. For the appetite."

He knocked his back neat. Larry did the same, and they sat silent for a moment.

"Tell me the truth, Larry," his father began. "You're a married man, almost a father, you could tell me." He said it with a smile and a wink, now that the mother was safely underground, and nodded in the direction of the kitchen. "She's really a *shiksa,* no?"

It was a two-year-old joke between them. And each time Larry answered with a shrug and a laugh, "Could be."

"How's your apartment, Papa?" he asked.

"Fine, fine," his father answered, looking into his shot glass.

"They give you enough heat?"

"Oh, sure."

Larry couldn't go on with it. Reaching for the whiskey bottle again, he asked, "A little more, Pop?"

His father raised his palm vertically. "No."

Larry let his hand fall from the bottle. His father gazed through the window where snow was beginning to fall. Suddenly he said, "All right, yes, I will, a little more."

As they finished their seconds, Penny called them to the dining room. "It looks good," said Larry's father politely. Penny's face brightened. Then his father, about to sit in his accustomed chair, seemed to remember something. Taking Penny's arm he said, "Let me look at you. I hardly saw you before. You look good. But tell me, where you keeping it, in your handbag?"

Penny's face broke into a delighted smile. "Oh, Papa!" she said. "Just a few more months and you'll be complaining that the crying keeps you up. You'll. . . ." she stopped abruptly.

"Let's eat," said Larry.

They sat down and Larry felt grateful, as he always did when his father came to a meal, that he was not intimidated by the Jensen silver candlesticks—tarnished as they were—or the white Museum of Modern Art dishes—wedding presents from Penny's side. None of these things could disguise from his father the real purpose of such a sitting down. It was to eat, and he did. They had little conversation.

Larry thought of another "dining room" that had been no more than a bulged passageway between two other rooms, without windows, where they had sat under the six-bulbed chandelier with little brown paper lampshades—his mother's extravagance. But his father kept three of the bulbs twisted loose so that they did not light. "Who sees us here?" he had asked.

WHEN the meal was over, Penny, Larry, and his father seated themselves in the living room. Larry looked at them all now in the moonlight of television. His wife, nervously reaching for a cigarette with one hand, rubbing the cat down with the other; the cat, looking to him to be dangerously near her hour; his father, open-mouthed as at the creation of the world. All his straggly, limping household. The next move was his. He couldn't make it.

He jumped up. "Papa, I still have work to do on my thesis tonight. I'm going inside for a while."

His eyes glued to the screen, Larry's father waved him away. "Sure, sure. Go, Larry."

He went to his study and found Penny close behind him. "Get back inside," he said.

"Are you going to ask him in here?" she demanded.

"Leave me alone. I don't know. Go watch television."

He wanted very badly to go to sleep. But he sat at his desk, gazing at the index cards, the card-file boxes, the library reserve slips

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with catalog numbers written on them, his half-written first chapter: "Roots of the Present Dilemma in Antiquity," and tried to think. But nothing came to his mind except that he wanted to crawl under the blankets and sleep.

He took a packet of cards from the file box, rolled off the rubberband, and idly began turning the cards face down on the desk in a kind of mosaic arrangement. One by one he faced each card up, looked at it, replaced it face down in another spot. It came to him what he was doing: dealing out the cards for a game of "Concentration" that he had played as a kid. All the cards in the deck were laid face down on the table and you tried, when your turn came, to make a pair with two picks. You had to show your cards when you picked, and if they were unpaired, you turned them face down again, but changed their locations so that only you, you hoped, would remember where they were when your turn came again.

Soon it came to him also why he had been playing "Concentration," because he had begun to think about an incident from the store. He had come to the store after his classes one day to help, and a woman had walked in after him and asked his mother for a blue slip, size 44. His mother had looked first on one shelf, then another, bending down to the bottom, standing on the little stepladder to peer at the top of a column of shelves. She had come down, her face flushed.

"I don't think if they make that size in such a color," she had said to the woman. "Take a black."

"What's the matter," his father had roared out from the back of the store. "You don't want to sell your customers? Or you don't know your own stock?" He had ducked under the counter and pulled out a dusty box —blue slip, size 44.

Larry had tried on many Saturday nights and Sundays when the store was closed, to arrange the stock. But it was hopeless. Soon everything would be a jumble again, because they would shove merchandise back in the bins any old way in their eagerness to please a customer.

Or was it only that? Sometimes he thought there was something else too. That they really *wanted* to trick each other, like in "Concentration."

He picked up the cards quickly and put them into the file box again. He didn't like to think about the charades in the store. It still made him feel sick, even at this distance.

Through the half-open door of his study, Larry heard, mixed with the television voices, the voice of his father, in his new wisdom, explaining the commercial to Penny.

"You think that's the cake from the recipe they tell you they put in the oven? No! It's a different cake entirely."

"You said it, Papa," Penny answered. "They're all *goniffs*."

Something Penny picked up from Larry's father was this old-time Yiddish word for thief. In Penny's family no flick of the old sorrowful-comical tongue had been allowed to touch the children. But like the princess in "Sleeping Beauty," Penny wandered through all the rooms of her young life till she came to what was forbidden.

"My father," his father was saying, "what did he know of such things? Never a kind word to us, never a sweet look to his wife. Can you imagine, *I* should have had such a father like in the play? *I* should go to school, my father should buy *me* a car, give *me* money to travel and see the world? He was as mean as could be, to prepare us for later on. So we wouldn't be disappointed in life."

There was silence. Then Larry's father sighed deeply. "Aah, what's the good? I lived in the dark. Now it's almost over for me."

Larry had never heard his father speak this way before, and his face grew hot. What kind of parody was this? Then he thought better of it. No, it was sincere. His father's own wail for his own sorrows. He never saw the connection between Larry's and his. The generations could only project backwards, on a bridge of grievances. How ludicrous that was. When you came down to it, just ludicrous.

Larry stood up. "Papa!" He went to the doorway of the living room.

Federal-Man was on. The scene was the inside of a bank vault. Thieves were packing in dynamite.

"Papa," he said.

"It's going to go off before they get away," his father said.

Larry waited. There was a tremendous

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explosion. Martial music came up loud, and a strong male voice told how many years everybody was getting.

"How do you like the way they figured out where the money was?" his father said. "Brilliant men, aren't they?"

Larry wasn't sure whether his father meant the crooks or the cops, but what the hell did it matter?

"Papa," Jerry said, "come into my room. There's something I want to show you."

"Oh yeah?" said his father in surprise. Meekly, he got up and followed.

In his room, Larry pointed to the stack of papers on his desk. "This is how far I am in my thesis."

"Wonderful, wonderful," said his father. "When it's all through how many stacks like this will you have?"

"About five."

"Don't say! So big? That's wonderful."

"Papa," Larry said abruptly, thinking it would be over soon, "Why don't you come live with us?"

"You mean I should move in?"

"Sure. Why not? We have the room." He didn't say any of the little lubricating things needed at such a time—about how much they wanted him, how they worried about his being alone, about how he could be company for Penny and the baby. He kept it plain fare. Not very nourishing maybe, but all he had to set before him—a hard-boiled egg in a cracked soup-plate.

"I should stay here with you and your wife? That's what you're saying?"

"Yes."

He looked Larry soberly and steadily in the eye and shook his head up and down a few times. Larry had no idea what it meant. He knew it was not an answer. A reflection of some kind.

Suddenly his father's face cleared. He laughed a formal little deprecating laugh. A Jewish-type laugh. Or maybe it was Japanese.

"Then where would I visit?" his father asked. "You know I like to visit. If I lived with you, where would I visit?"

"You're sure, Papa?" Larry asked.

"I'm sure," his father answered.

This time it was Larry's turn to give his father a heavy look and to nod his head. "All right, Papa," he said.

They returned to the living room and his father announced that he was leaving.

"Must you, Papa?" Penny asked sorrowfully.

And Larry added, "Stay a while Papa, and meet a friend who's coming. In fact you know him. Finnegan, remember? Then I'll drive you home."

"No. It's enough," his father said.

Larry helped him on with his coat, a shabby brown herringbone. His father pulled out of the pocket the beige cashmere muffler Penny had knitted for him, looped it around his neck and crossed it carefully over his chest.

He went out, refusing, as usual, Larry's offer of a lift or of company on the walk to the subway.

Larry leaned against the window looking down, waiting to see his father come out into the street, and watched him walk in the lamplit snow.

"Did you ask him?" Penny asked.

"He refused," Larry answered.

He turned from the window to look at her. Her eyes were intently on him, very full and unhappy. She was stroking Max, who looked at him once, and yawned.

Larry sat next to them. "Some things," he said, "just can't be made new."

He stuck out his little finger. "Fins?" he asked softly. Slowly she hooked her little finger around his and answered, "Fins."

FINNEGAN, of course, came early. Loneliness beat him from his furnished apartment the way hunters in Africa beat small animals from the bush.

He tore off his overcoat, kicked off his shoes, pulled off his wet socks and draped them on the radiator, gave Penny a resounding kiss, and sank into an armchair.

"Aah," he said, "Aah comfort, aah companionship. Oh, people, people, you'll have to give thanks for your blessings when I tell you what my life has been like."

"Poor Finny," said Penny. "What's the matter?"

"Everything. All of it. You two probably don't even notice—what does it matter when there's someone to come home to?"

"What's eating you, Finn?" Larry asked.

"Have you noticed how early it's getting dark lately?"

"It happens every year," Larry said.

"I thought you'd take that insensitive

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tone," said Finnegan. "Sure, it's bad enough ordinarily. You step into the street after work. Bingo, it's already dark. You go straight home because tonight you're going to work. You're going to be somebody. You eat your supper fast, just to get through with it. You want to know what I eat?"

"No," said Larry.

"I do," said Penny.

"Never mind," said Finnegan. "It's not appetizing. So there you are, the whole evening ahead. Do you work? I give you half an hour, myself forty-five minutes because of strong character and self-discipline. Then, brrp, brrp, brrp!" In quick, agile movements, Finn pantomimed picking up the receiver, dialing, drumming his fingers on his knee. "Hello, hello. Help, save me."

Penny leaned over and put her hand on Finnegan's arm. "It will be spring before you know, Finny. In the meantime, you can come live with us."

Finn looked at her blankly. "That's what I mean though. It's not just winter solstice —that crap. It's not going to lighten up. It's THE DARK. Inching up, creeping in, taking hold. Every day a little darker. It's like leprosy. You don't know it's got you until one day your nose falls off, splash! into the soup."

He leaped onto his bare feet. "Oh, my children. The time of the great darkness is coming. You must cleave unto one another." He sat down moodily again, his feet on the chair, hugging his knees. "Everyone's got someone to cleave to but me."

Larry heard Penny saying gravely, "I know what you mean, Finny. My nose doesn't have to drop off before I know what's coming. I know the dark is coming too." He was already heading toward the kitchen and called to Finnegan to help him dig the ice cubes out of the trays.

"I'll do it, I'll do it," said Penny, dumping Max to the floor. Larry watched their progress into the kitchen, Penny slow and listing, Max following closely, high-tailed and suspect.

LARRY took hold of Finnegan's arm. "I want to talk to you." Instead of taking him to the study, which was too close to the kitchen, he led him to the bedroom. Both he and Penny had been back to the room several times, but it struck him now for the first time that the bed was still unmade. The big white fleecy blanket with its satin ribbon binding—more trousseau—dragged to the floor on the side of the bed nearest the door. Someone, maybe Penny, maybe he, had walked on it and left shoe marks. He looked at it as though it were an injured child. A beautiful blanket. How many people had white blankets on their bed? Why did they have to walk over it? At the same time he cursed himself for a covetous bastard. He was houseproud on his wife's father's money.

Finnegan flopped on the bed and Larry turned away, pretending to examine his chin in the mirror. "I need a shave," he said. On the dresser top were Penny's toilet articles—bottles and jars—set at odd intervals and angles, like chessmen in a suddenly interrupted game.

"Nothing in this house is in one piece," he burst out to Finn. "Everything's broke, chipped, cracked, crocked, or burned. Us too, Finn."

"Why you silly bastard. You fell in so lucky you don't even have a complaint."

"Things aren't right, Finn."

"Sure, I told you. It's the dark. It's closing in."

The glum insistence of Finn's joke was making itself felt. It crept along Larry's skin like a draft.

"Penny wants my father to come live with us," he said.

Finnegan had been letting his shoes dangle off the edge of the bed. Now he hoisted himself back so that his heels rested on the blanket, and he folded his arms under his head. "If I were you, and Penny was my wife, and your father my father, I'd make a strong stand. I remember him from the old days."

"He's changed a lot, Finn. You haven't seen him since my mother died."

"They get old they get feeble. That's justice."

Larry didn't answer. Instead, he looked at his face in the mirror. He was the picture of his father as he used to be. He had the same deep-set black eyes, the same long, down-curving nose, the same large, soft cheeks that he knew from watching his father's old age would one day sag lower than his chin. His beard, like his father's, was tough and very black, and grew high

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up under his eyes. When he had dressed his best to appear on the City College debating team his mother had said with pride to his father, "Did you ever think you would see yourself dressed up in a tweed jacket so handsome?" But when he wore his tuxedo and took his date (who wasn't Jewish) to the prom, his mother shrieked with bitter laughter and said, "Look, look at that face, how it thinks it's going to stop being Abe Goldstein's son!"

FINN sat up on the bed. "Why all of a sudden does Penny want your father to live with you?" Without waiting for an answer he went on. "Maybe because of impending motherhood. She wants to consolidate her world into one big cozy crib. Then of course she couldn't stand her own parents, so by some crazy logic it all fits."

"Maybe she should have married someone else," Larry said slowly, scaring himself as he said it. "Why don't mothers see to it that their daughters marry the right men? I know, it's too square. Besides, the daughters aren't even speaking to the mothers."

"Penny couldn't be married to anyone else," Finn said. "She's positively your woman." Then he added glumly, "Everyone's got somebody to cleave to but me."

"Then tell me why is it things are so wrong? Penny gets more and more eccentric. And then there's me and my thesis. It doesn't get done. It just doesn't get done. I work on it. But I also don't work on it. I'm so much better suddenly at everything else. I practice my recorder. I read the papers, three a day—do I have to read three a day? Why do I have to be so perverse? And I clip things. My filing consumes hours. And talk. And dream. Waking and sleeping, I dream. I daydream sometimes that I'm giving a lecture at the Sorbonne in French, and there's my mother in the audience, wearing a cockade hat and knitting, and shrieking above the applause, 'Look at that face!'"

"You think your father living here would bring a benediction?"

"I don't know. But how do you think it would be, just once, to be able to do a right thing?"

Finn thought a moment. "First straighten yourself about what's right. Every story, you know, every situation, has its own right ending. The right ending is finally what everything adds up to. Not what you wish it did, but what it does."

"Life is arithmetic, you think?"

"Certainly. Every relationship a long column of additions and subtractions. In your case, with your father, sum it up, you get zero. Don't try to make it a passing grade and don't blame yourself. Zero is the right answer. Look, if I read in the paper that a boy kills his mother, I'm not filled with horror. I read on. He babbles things: his mother burned his hand with a candle when he was seven, punished him by making him stay in bed for a week, and so on. By the time I've finished the article I've seen the beautiful mathematics of life shine through. We see the right answer because the poor mad boy is incapable of juggling the figures the way the rest of us do. The mad boy doesn't conceal his right answer from us any more than Einstein tried to fool us about the speed of light."

Larry's attention had not stayed with Finnegan's argument. It had wandered back to his father, and now he said, "He's so stiff-necked. For him to agree to it, I'd have to go out to him in a way that's just not in me to do."

"How could it be in you?" Finn said impatiently. "He never put it there."

Larry lifted the perfume bottle, removed the stopper, and sniffed. A sweet, flowery scent filled his nostrils. He was startled to find that it conjured up all of Penny—her face, body, and voice, as well as her smell. He felt a stab in his heart as he recalled what he had said about her marrying someone else. As if to atone, he turned his back on Finn and kissed the bottle before putting it down. But in doing so he noticed again that the stopper was chipped and he said sadly to Finnegan, "I don't know. It seems as if everything has started to smash or warp or crack."

Finn stood up, walked on the blanket, clapped his hand on Larry's shoulder as he passed through the door and said, "It's the dark."

Larry began making the bed. He had opened something in his mind to Finn and now he couldn't shut it down again. A welter of images to describe his state was forming in his brain. To calm himself, he smoothed the bedclothes with care. "Out, chaos!" he cried, shaking a sheet.

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Never, he reflected, since he had been old enough to read a book, had he ever done a thing with undivided attention. While he read he would make double images—one from the book, one from his fantasy world of the future. He had done well in school because—why? Because he was bright. Wasn't he bright? Didn't all the IQ tests testify and hadn't his teachers wrung his hand and told him so? And then the competition. And the challenge of a particular class to crack, a particular exam or paper to hurl himself through in a mad frenetic sweat of particular goal and achievement.

But here, now, finished with classes and conferences and seminars, adrift on his own, where was his brilliance? Shattered into a hundred shining points, scattered over a swelling surface like glitter on the ocean. And he couldn't—God—couldn't drop anchor and sink into a subject. Just as it seemed the bright pieces might, in a lull, come together, up rose the thought of his father like a wave, humping the water, sending the points of light dancing again.

HE ASKED now the question he had ignored when Finnegan asked it. Did he think his father's coming, if he could go so far as to believe in his father's coming, would bring a benediction? For him, not. A too-late closing of the barn door was all. With the horse already galloping over the plain (he threw away the water image and saw the heaving, panting horse, frantic, unguided, what a shame, what a shame) without shoes, or saddle or bridle, all unprepared. He would run till he stumbled, and if he was able, pick himself up and run some more. He hadn't grown up slow and easy and sure. No, the barn door had opened a crack and he had streaked out, thundering hoofs and flying mane, and his teachers, and he with his mirror eye, had watched his frenzy and sweat and said, "There's what it takes to get there." But time to graze boy, family and sweet home tethers, and flying horses write no theses, boy. The unshod hoofs were tender from too many stony paths, and the legs were gamey, and the early diet of brambles and bitter herbs marred the digestion forever.

For Penny it was different. She wanted, needed this father. And looked to him to somehow make it right. But suppose he couldn't make it or anything else right, what then? Why then, she was just mixed up enough herself to take it without quite knowing why or what was wrong. It wasn't for nothing he had picked for wife a girl just this side of the loony bin. She would never hate him for failing.

She knew the feel of a right thing though, he'd say that. She had a child or an idiot's feeling for home and warm things and nice smells and "Oh! to be able to do a right thing," he ended saying to himself as he had said to Finn. The sheer, refreshing, sweet springtime rain and therapy of a right move.

"But not alone, I can't do it alone," he readdressed to his father the echo of Penny's long-past appeal. "And you won't help me. Let's blame it all on your father, pop. I never knew him so let's blame him. Let's give the old bastard a kick. It's not in us because—we have Finn's word for it—he never put it there."

Larry gave the two pillows a final caress ("You at least can lie easy till we get here") and headed for the living room.

Penny and Finn had already started their drinks, sitting friendly and silent across the coffee table.

"I've just been telling Penny," Finnegan said to Larry, "maybe I'll take her up on the invitation to move in. Paying boarder of course. At first. Later I'll take advantage. Become indispensable—you won't hear of my leaving. And of course, I'll never go."

Larry thought of having their very own herald of the dark, night and day in the bosom of the family, and shuddered. "Where's my sense of humor gone?" he wondered. "I used to enjoy old Finn's idea of a joke."

"Up to Penny," he said, moving nearer her chair. "I can't stand the thought myself." He saw his chance to lift the cat off Penny's lap and said quickly, in a low voice, "I'll put Max in the kitchen."

"No," said Penny. "She'll be lonely there. Just put her on the floor. She'll be all right."

Penny watched him deposit Max gently on the floor, beyond the rug, and then said in her serious way, "Finny certainly can't go out in all this snow. No one should go out in all this snow."

Finnegan put down his glass and made a humble Hindu bow.

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"But not the extra room, Finny, I'm sorry, it would have to be the sofa. We have to leave the extra room open for a little while longer."

"You're not still thinking of it for my father!" Larry burst out in spite of himself.

Penny's face flushed. "No," she said, looking away. She dived suddenly out of her chair, scooped up Max like a seagull skimming a fish out of the sea and ran for the kitchen. Larry looked at the floor and saw three little dots like melted chocolate, while Penny's voice, suddenly brave, called from the kitchen, "I meant for a while. In general."

"This calls for a reduction in my rent," said Finnegan. "How often does it happen? At, say, a dollar-fifty per episode?"

"Well, Penny takes care of it," Larry said nervously. Raising his voice a little he added, "She's wonderful with animals. She has a lot of patience."

In a few minutes Penny returned and sat down. With one hand she held Max, towelled like a wine bottle, in her lap, with the other hand she lifted Max's little pointed face, which drooped. "Poor Max," she whispered.

"Time for refills," Larry said, setting up a clatter with the ice cubes and bottles. "Penny, refill? Finnegan? A touch?"

Finnegan was leaning forward to extend his glass, when he sounded a piercing whistle that shattered Larry's ear. Larry's nerveless fingers let fall the jigger glass, spilling whiskey and sending a glass chip, naturally, skittering across the table. He followed Finnegan's stare to Penny's blouse. Max's droopy head peeped out from between the middle buttons.

"Good old Penny," said Finnegan, leaning back and hugging his knee.

Under Penny's blouse the body of the cat spread grotesquely.

"It's too much," Larry thought. He wanted to stand up and say, to whatever devils gathered, leering, in the four corners of his house, "Begone. . . ." He wanted to say to his old friend Finn, "Dear buddy of my childhood, go home. My wife is not well. I am not well. Our cat, Maxine, also. . . ." In fact, he did stand up and opened his mouth, but he never found out what it was he was about to say because just then the doorbell rang.

Larry went shakily to the door, expecting to see a ghost—Banquo or Ichabod Crane maybe—and threw it open.

Bareheaded, soaked, his few strands of hair plastered to his scalp, tiny ice-crystal flowers abloom on the ridges of his muffler —there stood his father. He was carrying his old black suitcase in one hand. The other hand he extended formally for a handshake.

"Papa, my God!" was all Larry could say as he pulled his father inside with the handshake.

"I was thinking, thinking, all the time in the train," his father began calmly. "My son asked me something and I refused. Why should I refuse? Because I didn't believe a person should say yes. That's the old way. From the old days. From the dark. I came back to tell you that if you want me to stay, I'll stay. Why should I say no? I even brought a few things, for a start."

"That's fine, Papa. Very good. I'm glad you did it. Yes," Larry said, while he helped his father off with his things. And the whole time he asked himself, "How do I feel? How do I feel? How do I feel?"

The truth was that, aside from the shock, he didn't know.

But one thing he could do was call into the living room and say, "Penny, Papa's here!"

He heard the cat's short yowl as she got dumped to the rug, and then Penny's heels clattering on the bare parts of the floor. In the doorway to the hall where they stood she stopped, suddenly shy or scared. A smile curved her lips, her eyes widened, she stared entranced, as if some prophetic stranger out of Biblical days had stepped across her threshold. So at least for the time being, Larry had that for a guide.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

A KIND OF TRIBUTE

Death of a District Man

DONALD PANETH

JAMES W. RODER, a district man for the Associated Press who covered the Bronx at night from 5:30 P.M. to 2 A.M., had been a newspaper man in New York City for almost thirty years upon his death at the age of forty-nine. Jim had worked previously for the old New York *American* and the now defunct City News Association, was known as a good reporter, hard-working, keen, and resourceful, with excellent contacts among the police and officials of the borough.

Jim was a short, wiry man, white-haired at forty-five, who gave the appearance of being somewhat taller than he was. He moved jauntily, had a gray, bristly mustache, very alert blue eyes, a mild, thoughtful manner, and always wore the same light blue sports jacket and slacks. He was a lively raconteur, a Friday night boxing fan, a constant, loving reader, and, after a fashion, an amateur painter—he liked to make copies of modern paintings, especially those by Toulouse-Lautrec, Van Gogh, Gauguin, and Modigliani. He lived with his wife, daughter, and son-in-law in a three-room apartment within walking distance of the 48th Precinct, at Bathgate and Tremont Avenues, which was Bronx police headquarters.

While an aggressive enough reporter, Jim was in some important ways unassertive, hesitant, nervous. He used to worry about his job, for instance, talk frequently about making a trip to Europe—he always said he particularly wanted to visit Athens—but usually he would either stay home on his vacation or spend a few days at the home of his wife's sister in Connecticut. Even though he had an expense account, he would never take a taxi to the scene of a story, and rather than rent a bigger apartment, he and his wife slept on a hideaway bed in the living room, giving the bedroom to their daughter and her husband. Like many another newspaper man, he had vague longings to write but did not seriously attempt it. And at the same time over the years he turned down on different pretexts a couple of good jobs, one, when City News folded, on the New York *Times*, choosing instead to go to work for the AP.

In the Bronx, Jim and reporters for the *Times* and the New York *Mirror* shared a traditionally bare, dirty office called the "shack," on the third floor of a walk-up building across from headquarters. The shack consisted of a narrow hall, where two telephone booths were installed, and two small rooms—a front room, furnished with a worn couch, a desk (without typewriter), several wooden chairs, and an AM radio and a police radio, and a back room in which there was only a wash basin and an old uncovered bed spring where a tired or drunk reporter used to flop during the night using a couple of telephone books as a pillow.

Walking or taking the bus to work, Jimmy used to arrive punctually at the shack, call his city desk—"Hello, Bernie, Jimmy. Any-

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OVER the years DONALD PANETH, a former reporter for the New York *Times*, has contributed a number of urban portraits ("Pawnbroker on Eighth Avenue," March 1954; "County Official," November 1953; "McCaffrey's Bar and Grill," July 1953; "Bronx Housewife," September 1951). Here Mr. Paneth, who now works for the New York *Daily Mirror*, describes the vanishing man of big-city journalism.

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thing for me?"—and then go across the street to the precinct for the first time that night. He would talk to the desk lieutenant or sergeant on duty, check the borough and city-wide police tickers in the Communications Bureau, and drop in on the borough Homicide Bureau and the Motor Vehicle Bureau, and finally the precinct Detective Bureau. "Good evening, gentlemen," he would say, and then, after a short conversation, "Anything doing?" Usually there was little, and Jimmy would return to the shack and read the late editions of the afternoon papers until the other reporters arrived about 7 o'clock.

From time to time, a good story would break in the borough after dark—a sensational murder or a horrible disaster—but except for a run-of-the-mill fire, auto accident, hold-up, stabbing, or suicide, which Jim or one of the other reporters would cover by phone and which all would then call into their offices, most nights were uneventful.

The reporters would sit around and talk, turn on both radios and listen simultaneously to police calls and the ball game, watch the cars and people passing along Tremont Avenue, go out for coffee or across the street to the precinct several times during the night. "It's a slow night," one would remark. "How about some coffee," Jimmy would say. Detectives, free-lance photographers, reporters from other parts of the city would come by, and occasionally, in a spasm of boredom, all would go to a movie. Sometimes, Jimmy would work up a feature out of some angle in a routine story and pass it on to the others. Sometimes, when it was late and quiet, he would reminisce nostalgically about big stories he had covered, various newspaper men, the days of prohibition, the Snyder-Gray murder case, the Lindbergh kidnaping, Arnold Rothstein, "Two Gun" Crowley, Vincent Coll, Judge Crater.

JIMMY also used to pass a part of almost every night reading. On pay day, when he picked up his check and said hello to the fellows at the AP office in Rockefeller Center, he usually would browse around in the midtown stores that specialized in recently published, remaindered books, buying one or two. And he constantly reread Shakespeare and James Joyce, who were his favorite authors. One of Jim's best friends was a Bronx police sergeant named Edward O'Rourke who introduced him to *Finnegans Wake*. O'Rourke, six feet four, with a long, bony face, deepset dark eyes, and black hair, had been born on a small farm in Abbyfeale, Ireland, and as a young man had both studied for the priesthood and had a "taste for writing." O'Rourke was fluent in Latin, ancient Greek, French, and Gaelic. He used to say that a familiarity with twenty-six languages, Greek and Roman history and mythology, Irish history and folklore for the past fifty years, and all of English literature was necessary to read *Finnegans Wake*. He encouraged Jim to read it, at first for the "sound of the language" and later for understanding.

On some nights, the photographers and reporters—all but Jim—would roughhouse a little. They would drink, begin to toss the shack's meager furniture out of the window, and disappear for hours in a car. "Where've you been?" Jim would exclaim exasperatedly. "Leave me all alone! Suppose a story'd broke." Occasionally, a story did break and then he would hold it back, not phoning it into his office until he could reach the others. He used to cover consistently for one reporter, a heavy-set, middle-aged, balding man, who on summer nights would strip down to his underwear and shoot marbles in the shack, and got drunk almost every night.

Jim customarily would call his city desk for a "Good night" a few minutes before 2 A.M., and then, with the morning papers under his arm, walk home from the shack through the dark and silent streets, sometimes in a brooding, irritable mood stopping for a cup of coffee at an all-night luncheonette on Webster Avenue. Reaching home, he would stay up to six or seven, reading in the kitchen, and then go to bed, sleeping until one or two. Then, in the afternoon, he would watch the ball game on TV, paint, read, or take a walk until supper. Over a long period of years his daily life scarcely varied, except on his days off, Saturday and Sunday, when he and his wife might have guests, visit relatives, see a movie, or go to a museum.

Only a short time before Jim's death a reporter coming into the shack one night casually asked him, "How're you?"

And Jim replied, "I think I'm coming to the end of my rope."

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Shocked, the reporter said, "What do you mean, Jim?"

"Aaah, never mind, kid," he said. "Forget it. Forget I said it."

But, it was clear Jim was feeling very tired, discouraged, and resigned. He was fed up with covering the Bronx, the tedious nights, the ugly, repetitious stories, the long flights of precinct stairs, and dismayed by a realization of his general aimlessness. He could not seem, though, to bring his everyday life and his dissatisfaction together in any intelligent change. He felt too that despite his capabilities he had never gone very far in the newspaper business, that he had stayed on the districts while the focus of news had shifted from local to international. And he felt that the attitudes of press associations and newspapers toward local news had become stereotyped and offhand. In any case, like most reporters, he had observed a lot more than had ever got into the papers—innumerable facts, situations, occurrences, emotions were not considered "news"—and his perceptions and his true responses had been left unexpressed.

Jim died of a heart attack on a Sunday night a few weeks before his fiftieth birthday. His funeral was attended by his grieving family and friends, a large number of cops, detectives, and newspaper men, and an official representative from the Bronx district attorney's office. As a kind of tribute, two radio cars from Bronx police headquarters escorted the funeral cortege on its way to a cemetery in Queens, down the Grand Concourse, across Tremont Avenue and past the shack to the borough line.

SIREN

LEONARD WOLF

Police or fire? We've been in bed because
Of weariness and love; but it's not safe.
Our sheets have lost their warmth, our
pillows twist—
Someone's wounded; someone's breaking
laws.

Drowsy, perfumed and beautiful, you lie
No longer fast asleep; the night has lost
All that the dark keeps commonplace and
clean,
All the stillness that we slumber by.

Ambulance or fire—what's the news?
The stars are cut by gimlets, and their light
Shines on kittens in cold alleys where
Someone stumbles, someone else pursues.

Sleep's the privilege we do not own
However we have earned it. Take my hand
And hurry, darling, we may still have time
To steal a roadmap; to get out of town.

LEONARD WOLF is a young poet who was born in Rumania; he is now teaching at San Francisco State College. His verse has appeared in COMMENTARY several times before.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

A JEWISH WATCHMAKER IN OLD VIRGINIA

Two Letters from the Archives

A VIVID glimpse into Jewish life in Virginia during the last decades of the 18th century is given by the two letters we present below. Originally written in Yiddish, they are from Rebecca Samuel, who was then living with her husband and two children in the town of Petersburg, Virginia, to her parents, Alexander by name, in Hamburg, Germany. The Samuels had evidently spent some time in England.

These two letters (the first of which is incomplete and the second undated—but we know that the family was still in Petersburg in 1792) are included in a volume which will be out this month, entitled *American Jewry. Documents, Eighteenth Century*. The collection is edited by Jacob R. Marcus, director of the American Jewish Archives, and published by the Hebrew Union College Press.—ED.

Petersburg, January 12, 1791
Wednesday, 8th [7th?] Shebat, 5551

DEAR AND WORTHY PARENTS:

I received your precious letter with much pleasure and understand therefrom that you are in good health, thank God, and that made us especially happy. The same is not lacking with us—may we live to be a hundred years. Amen.

Dear parents, you complain that you do not receive any letters from us, and my mother-in-law writes the same. I don't know what's happening. I have written more letters than I have received from you. Whenever I can and have an opportunity, I give letters to take along and I send letters by post when I do not have any other opportunity. It is already six months since we received letters from you and from London. The last letter you sent was through Sender [Alexander], and it was the beginning of the month of Ab [July 1790] when we received it. Now you can realize that we too have been somewhat worried. We are completely isolated here. We do not have any friends, and when we do not hear from you for any length of time, it is enough to make us sick. I hope that I will get to see some of my family. That will give me some satisfaction.

You write me that Mr. Jacob Renner's son Reuben is in Philadelphia and that he will come to us. People will not advise him to come to Virginia. When the Jews of Philadelphia or New York hear the name Virginia, they shudder. And they are not wrong! It won't do for a Jew. In the first place it is an unhealthful district, and we are only human. God forbid, if anything should happen to us, where would they throw us? There is no cemetery in the whole of Virginia. In Richmond, which is twenty-two miles from here, there is a Jewish community the size of two *minyans* and the two together cannot muster a [*minyan* when needed?].

You cannot imagine what kind of Jews they have here [in Virginia]. They were all German itinerants who made a living by begging in Germany. They came to America during the war, as soldiers, and now they wouldn't recognize themselves.

One can make a good living here, and all live in peace. Anyone can do what he wants. There is no rabbi in all of America to excommunicate anyone. This is a blessing here: Jew and Gentile are as one. There is no *galut* here. In New York and Philadelphia there is more *galut*. The reason is that there are many German Gentiles and Jews there. The German Gentiles cannot forsake their anti-Jewish prejudice; and the German Jews cannot forsake their disgraceful conduct; and that's what makes *galut*.

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DEAR PARENTS:

I hope my letter will ease your mind. You can now be reassured and send one of the family to me at Charleston, South Carolina. This is the place to which, with God's help, we will go after Passover. The whole reason why we are leaving this place is because of *Yehudishkeit*.

Dear parents, I know quite well you will not want me to bring up my children as Gentiles. Here they cannot become anything else. Jewishness is pushed aside here. There are here [in Petersburg] ten or twelve Jews, and they are not worthy to be called Jews. We have a *shohet* here who goes to market and buys *terefah* [non-Kosher] meat and then brings it home. On Rosh Hashanah and on Yom Kippur the people worshipped here without one *sefer torah* and not one of them wore the *tallit* . . . except Hayyim and my Sammy's godfather. The latter is an old man of sixty, a man from Holland. He has been in America for thirty years already; for twenty years he was in Charleston, and he has been living here for four years. He does not want to remain here any longer and will go with us to Charleston . . . there is a blessed community of three hundred Jews.

You can believe me that I crave to see a synagogue to which I can go. The way we live is no life at all. We do not know what the Sabbath and the holidays are. On the Sabbath all the Jewish shops are open; and they do business on that day as they do throughout the whole week. But ours we do not allow to open. With us there is still some Sabbath. You must believe me that in our house we all live as Jews as much as we can.

As for the [Gentiles?], we have nothing to complain about. For the sake of a livelihood we do not have to leave here. Nor do we have to leave because of debts. . . . You cannot know what a wonderful country this is for the common man. One can live here in peace. Hayyim has made a clock that goes very accurately, just like the one in the Buchenstrasse in Hamburg. Now you can imagine what honors Hayyim has been getting here. In all Virginia there is no such clock, and Virginia is the greatest province in the whole of America, and America is the largest place in the world. Now you know what sort of a country this is. It is not too long since Virginia was discovered. It is a young country. And it is amazing to see the business they do in this little Petersburg. At times as many as a thousand hogsheads of tobacco arrive at one time, and each hogshead contains 1,000 and sometimes 1,200 pounds of tobacco. The tobacco is shipped from here to the whole world.

When Judah [brother?] comes here, he can become a watchmaker and a goldsmith, if he so desires. Here it is not like Germany where a watchmaker is not permitted to sell silverware. They do not know otherwise here. They expect a watchmaker to be a silversmith here. Hayyim has more to do in making silverware than with watchmaking. He has a journeyman, a silversmith, a very good artisan, and he, Hayyim, takes care of the watches. This work is well paid here, but in Charleston it pays even better.

All the people who hear that we are leaving give us their blessings. They say that it is sinful that such blessed children should be brought up here in Petersburg. My children cannot learn anything here, nothing Jewish, nothing of general culture. My Schoene, God bless her, is already three years old. I think it is time that she should learn something, and she has a good head to learn. I have taught her the bedtime prayers and grace after meals in just two lessons. I believe that no one among the Jews here can do as well as she. And my Sammy, God bless him, is already beginning to talk.

I could write more. However, I do not have any more paper.

I remain your devoted daughter and servant, Rebecca, the wife of Hayyim, the son of Samuel the Levite. I send my family, my . . . [mother-in-law?] and all my friends and good friends, my regards.

TO MR. AARON ALEXANDER,
ON THE NEW . . .
HAMBURG

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ON THE HORIZON

CONSCIENCE AND CONSCIOUSNESS IN JAPAN

Impressions of an American Traveler

SIDNEY HOOK

TOKYO

THE modernization of Japan, with its great dangling balloons by day and dancing arabesques of neon lights at night, strikes the eye of the visitor at every turn, especially in the huge, sprawling cities. But modernization must not be confused with Westernization if by the latter we mean an acceptance of such basic values as individuality, the democratic process, and social equality, together with the specific forms of behavior which are historically associated with these terms, for all their vagueness.

Japan's greatest resource, her most valuable "national treasure," is her people, whose industry, patience, and ingenuity in making do so well with so little must deeply impress the most casual observer. Insofar as the future lies in their hands, it is important to note some of their outstanding traits.

During the weeks of my visit, my discussions with Japanese friends concerning the traits of their countrymen almost always ended up with their assertion that a distinctive Japanese cast of mind could be described, a mode of feeling and thinking quite different from that of the West. To my surprise, when I brought up the question in a talk with one of Japan's foremost physicists, anticipating that he would pooh-pooh the idea of a distinctive Japanese mind as a notion of the "litterateurs," he himself affirmed it. He left me shaken, but not altogether convinced.

But I should like first to put down in a haphazard sort of way some of the Japanese traits of lesser importance which impressed me. Most obvious of all was the ubiquitous courtliness and graciousness of manner which were manifested on almost all occasions—except in traffic or in crowds. Here the rudeness is as extraordinary as it is unexpected. In a society where people seem to swarm, where privacy because of the architecture of the Japanese home is a luxury of the rich, this elaborate graciousness helps a great deal to make life more supportable. It is allied to a hospitality which often seems excessive and not infrequently ends up by hurting those who give as well as those who receive in a spiral of mutual benefactions. (American visitors are sometimes unaware of the hardships in the households of their hosts left in the wake of the hospitality. Only the opposite numbers of the American businessman in Japan can chalk the cost of entertainment up to an expense account. I found the best procedure was to refuse entertainment outside the homes of friends. Where this was unavoidable and a Japanese could not endure being on the receiving end, I would tell him that *wari kan* [Dutch treat] was a point of honor for Americans abroad. In order to save your face, he would let you save his.)

A second trait, exhibited most conspicuously in the aesthetic aspects of Japanese life on almost every level, is simplicity. Mr. Nyozekan Hasegawa, a Japanese cross between Socrates and Thoreau, makes much

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SIDNEY HOOK, who spent the fall lecturing at Japanese and other Asian universities, here gives his impressions of the fledgling Japanese democracy. Professor Hook is the chairman of the philosophy department at New York University, and the author of an array of books on Marxism, philosophy, and other subjects.

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of this simple taste. In an unforgettable visit to his home, I listened to him challenge the Western distinction between the fine and useful arts. Stressing the functionality of all Japanese design, he bade me contrast some of the household objects of the West, like lamps and furniture heavy with embossed anachronisms, with the simple things of everyday use in his own home. Doubtless my impression of the pervasive aesthetic sensibility of Japanese life was heightened by my ignorance. Unable to read the huge signs (perhaps often enough vulgar advertisements) which sprawled hillside high across the countryside, I experienced them in virtue of their calligraphy as rather fascinating canvases of abstract art. The Japanese stoneworkers I observed seemed to handle heavy, grim rock with a gentleness that one would employ in the West only with living things. I probably mistook a universal technique for a special concern with the grain and shape and "feel" of the stone.

RELATED to this simplicity is a surface gentleness and a rather deep modesty in the Japanese character. I say a surface gentleness, because I know quite well what the Japanese (like other peoples) are capable of doing, especially as soldiers of their Emperor abroad. But I was impressed by the fact that the children whom I observed at play, and in the organized visits that are such a feature of Japanese school life, never pushed or shoved or resorted to physical violence. They would occasionally jeer at each other. Among adults, too, brawls and arguments of the kind which seem everyday occurrences in the West are rare. Even the taxi drivers, who are certainly the greatest threat to life and limb in the whole of Japan (next to the truck drivers), do not shout at each other. When I asked Japanese friends, after some narrow escapes, for a few choice epithets to hurl at the next murderous cab driver, what they suggested seemed to me awfully tame.

Nevertheless, I witnessed politically organized violence, on the occasion when students of the Communist Union (Zengakuren) sought to batter down the gates of a building in which some school principals were receiving instruction on how to organize courses in ethics. I saw sit-down and lay-down strikes, and the use of locked-arm tactics which is a form of mass violence. When I asked my Socialist party friends in the Diet to show me their scars after the newspapers had reported how they had physically repulsed the deputies of the government party who were seeking to enter their committee rooms on the occasion of the introduction of the Police Reform, they laughingly replied: *"This* time only the furniture was scarred. . . ."

Mr. Hasegawa, together with other Japanese (including former Premier Tanzan Ishibashi) whom I questioned about the growing violence of Japanese life, insisted that the Japanese have a marked aversion to any kind of extremism. When I inquired how they explained the extremism of the army and navy junior officers who had helped destroy the frail plant of democracy in Japan as a preface to the Second World War, and the postwar as well as present-day Communist extremism, they dismissed these as exceptional forms of behavior running counter to the main trends of Japanese history. The answer left me dissatisfied. To be sure, the Japanese public, like any public, gets fed up with the antics of extremists if they create hardships over a period of time. But from what I have observed and read, the opposition to extremism does not express itself with the vigor necessary to curb it. In other words, once an extremist group is able to mobilize real power, the Japanese tend to submit without a show of resistance. A small group of rowdy Communist elements in any organization who threaten dissenters with violence are able to dominate the entire organization without provoking a counterattack. Those who disagree with their methods either withdraw and leave the field of leadership to them, or, more often, remain silent and passive. So far as I can tell, although there have been some isolated revolts against feudal lords and central authorities in the past, there has never been a democratic revolution from below. Most of the changes in Japanese life have been introduced from the top. If the Russian Communists had occupied Japan after the war, I very much fear that, with outstanding exceptions, the shift from the worship of the Emperor to the worship of Stalin and the adoption of the Communist police-state would have proceeded with greater ease than the

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introduction of the democratic system by the American occupation.

The modesty of the Japanese character reflects itself in a pervasive shyness, which in intellectual matters sometimes takes the form of an inferiority complex. The Japanese are in the position of a proud people, never subjugated by others, with heroic legends of myth and history, and yet forever compelled to borrow from other cultures. They dislike having constantly to catch up with the Western world, whose technical supremacy is typified in the American victory and the bitter-sweet memories of the occupation. (There has always been a popular endemic hostility to Western influence.) The modern Japanese hero seems to be anyone who has won a prize in an international competition. The Japanese care very much about what others think of them, not only when they are abroad, like Americans, but even when at home. Occasionally they go to exaggerated lengths to explain what they imagine will strike foreigners as odd. One Japanese critic of the Kabuki play *Kumagai Jinya,* a moving tale of feudal loyalty in which a father sacrifices his son, writes: "It is sincerely hoped that foreign Kabuki fans will not be deceived . . . and led to believe that the Japanese have a cruel trait in their character which makes them think that killing one's child is the highest moral act." Shades of Abraham, Jephthah, Agamemnon, and Brutus!

THE characteristic Japanese modesty impresses the visitor most emphatically in the manners and comportment of the Japanese woman. It does not take long to observe, despite the changes introduced by the war and the Americans, that the male ego in Japan is a constant object of female solicitude. And except for those who have traveled abroad, Japanese men tend to resent the normal Western courtesies shown by visitors to their womenfolk. They say it spoils them. This sentiment is expressed even by some of those who are most vehement in their professions of "democracy"—a word which has acquired strange meanings in Japan. One night after a talk before an English-speaking group of relatively emancipated young men and women in Tokyo on "The Spiritual Crisis of Our Time" (for what it may signify, I add that this turned out to be the most popular theme in Japan, even in the universities, and the most convenient since one could discuss anything under it) we adjourned to a tea room for further conversation. To my delight I discovered a young woman in training as a social worker, not long from a small town, who sounded like a rebel—of American vintage 1890. A Japanese psychiatrist of an older generation who happened to be present—he had come to improve his English—listened with obvious distaste to my conversation with the young woman. He finally got up and said in English: "Don't forget, young woman, the best qualification for learning how to become a good social worker is to learn how to become a good wife!" She did not demur but when he left she turned to me and said: "That's what I always hear —particularly from my brother, who is now head of the family." When I asked why she didn't take issue with the remark when made, she confessed a reluctance to contradict an older person. She ended with an expression of wonder that a professor would deign to talk to her about her ideas. "No *Japanese* professor would. . . ."

With respect to sex, one observes, the Japanese are neither prudish nor prurient but natural and sensible. Nudity is functional, and undress a natural state to be in when bathing, for example. Decolletage, on the other hand, is regarded as obscene insofar as it calls attention to nudity at the wrong place and time. Western notions of privacy are puzzling to Japanese, and they do not understand why foreigners find rather comical the spectacle of a whole busload of passengers lined up on the roadside watering the fields as if performing a common rite.

Any visitor who has not strictly limited his observation of Japan's life to the night clubs and patchinko parlors will very soon see for himself the famous Japanese love of nature, and the ingenious universal talent of Japan's citizens for making the artificial express the natural, and the simple suggest the sophisticated. The fingers of the Japanese seem less naive than their thinking.

Japanese thought is syncretic in a way that their art is not. The mind of the Japanese tolerates incongruous and incompatible elements, the sensuous analogues of which their eyes and taste would reject at once. Buddhism with its transcendence and out-

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right supernaturalism seems foreign to the indigenous Shinto naturalism, which places man so fittingly into the convex frame of earth, sea, mountain, and sky. Both faiths are affirmed with equally tepid conviction, but it is strange that no school of thought has sought to marry Shinto naturalism with the Buddhist sense of compassion. Such a synthesis could have been a forerunner of modern scientific naturalism and humanism.

I SHOULD like here to comment on some attitudes I found prevalent among Japanese intellectuals, and particularly those in the academy—attitudes regularly displayed whenever the discussion turned to the atom bomb and Hiroshima. When I was in Hiroshima, a Japanese I was with asked me if it would not be tactless on his part to send postcard reproductions of scenes of Hiroshima, which is a city of great natural loveliness, to American acquaintances. "They always get so flustered," he murmured, "when anyone talks about the bomb or Hiroshima." Despite my assurances, he settled for cards of the Mia-jima Shrine.

Perhaps the bomb's greatest horror is that some of its victims are still dying, thirteen years later—something no one had anticipated. Whenever one of these victims dies, and each year on the anniversary of the explosion, the Communists launch a sustained and nation-wide anti-American campaign in which many join to show their "progressive" colors. No one reminds the Japanese, of course, that Stalin heartily approved the use of the bomb. In addition American visitors coming to Hiroshima often tell the press they "feel guilty," and are ashamed of being Americans. The Japanese do not "feel guilty" about Pearl Harbor. The Americans do not even mention it. The consequence is that although there is no personal rancor against individual Americans, even on the part of those who suffered and survived, a feeling has been built up that "the Americans" were guilty of a gratuitous, unprovoked attack, indeed the greatest "atrocity" in recorded history. This is not so much explicitly said as assumed.

I myself have always agreed with the position taken in the James Franck memorandum, which was that the power of the bomb should first have been demonstrated on an uninhabited island as a warning to the Tojo regime. This was not done apparently because it was feared the Japanese government would rush American prisoners to the bomb site and also that the bomb might not go off—insufficient reasons, it seems to me, not to have carried out the preliminary demonstration. Notice could have been short, thus preventing transfer of prisoners. And if the first bomb had not gone off, a second would. Nonetheless, it is not certain that the Japanese would have yielded even after an uninhabited region had been bombed, since they might not have been able to assess, from an uninhabited landscape, the bomb's power to destroy. In principle, Franck and his co-signers were prepared to use the bomb if the Japanese failed to surrender. The only possible justification of its use was that it saved more than a million American and Japanese lives, the estimated cost of storming the beaches of Japan. Nevertheless, in the light of what we know now about its radiation effects—and its political consequences—one could say that its use was a mistake, even though Truman and Churchill still argue the point.

When the subject came up, I usually began by saying that most Americans I knew were sorry about Hiroshima, and then added: "I suppose most Japanese are sorry about Pearl Harbor." To my surprise my Japanese friends did *not* think that most Japanese were sorry about Pearl Harbor: most Japanese were sorry that the war had been lost. The judgment of history had devastated them, not any sense of moral guilt. They did not relate Pearl Harbor and Hiroshima in any causal sequence. Without exception I was told that the Japanese regarded Pearl Harbor as a *consequence* of something else, presumably the American ultimatum to Japan to withdraw from China, but not as a *cause* of Hiroshima. I asked whether they believed the government of Japan in 1945 would have used atomic bombs against the West if it had possessed them. The emphatic and unanimous response was "they" certainly would have. "They" meant the Tojo government, toward which Japanese professors as a whole were lukewarm. These conversations with my Japanese colleagues left me with the impression that there does not seem to be a strong sense of moral guilt in Japanese life—certainly not about Pearl Harbor.

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I usually managed to say in the course of the discussion that under the circumstances any judgment against the American action was an inappropriate response, that both sides must remember but not brood about the past, and that the main problem was to *prevent* these actions from recurring, a political as well as a technical problem.

With few exceptions, the Japanese I met were in favor of immediate cessation of all tests of nuclear weapons, and against their further use. In public, but not always in private, they were also against Japanese possession of nuclear arms in the event United States forces withdrew. I would be lacking in candor if I did not report that despite the reasonable upshot of all these conversations, I detected a deeper, and less explicable, resentment among my Japanese friends at the use of the bomb. I traced it to a vague feeling some of them had that the bomb had been allowed to drop on Japan because it was inhabited by a yellow-skinned rather than a Caucasian people. That the war was over in Germany before the bomb was ready was not regarded as a decisive consideration. Although not so vocal as some other people on the color question, the Japanese are highly sensitive to any manifestation of racialism. When I told them how American liberals felt, one professor said: "Senator Fulbright is a liberal. Why is he silent about Little Rock?" Racialism is one question on which the Japanese demand an unambiguous attitude. In discussion, it was pointed out to me that the general Japanese attitude toward the perpetrators of Pearl Harbor, that they are to be condemned because they failed, is no different from the attitude of Germans toward Hitler, that he was a wicked man because he led Germany to defeat. I am not convinced of the parallelism. In Germany, *The Diary of Anne Frank* has been staged before audiences of thousands and has had a literally stunning effect. Comparable pictures of Japanese atrocities abroad are barred from Japan. The film based on Hiroshima, however, is widely distributed in Southeast Asia and other countries where it is used in the cause of Communist "peace campaigns."

Since my arrival in Japan a certain impression has been building up about the cultural and intellectual life of the country which I tried hard to resist but which has become fixed in my mind as a result of many talks and discussions. With some rare exceptions, and outside the technical disciplines, I sensed a lack of intellectual independence and moral courage among students, teachers, and writers in social and political matters. The students largely repeat the slogans and "facts" of the "progressives"—a word which here means pro-Communist. Their teachers, many of whom write for the press, divide into two main groups. One consists of pro-Communists of various shades, but believers all in the most vulgar variety of Marxism I have ever encountered, feeding on the translated pap which comes in a steady stream from the Soviet Union, and clinging to their stale clichés with the tenacity one finds only among superstitious peasants in the West. The second group is largely passive, but on matters on which it differs from the "progressives" fears to be called "reactionary." So far as I can make out, anyone who is outspokenly critical of vulgar Marxism, Communism, Soviet Russia, or China is a "reactionary." This passive group fears its colleagues, even its students, and as an insurance against the future "inevitable" day when the Communist world takes over, lends itself to Communist and/or anti-American campaigns. Japan is the only non-Communist country of the world in which the refugee Hungarian students reporting on the bloody Communist repression of the socialist liberation movement received a frosty reception at the hands of the student body. Little is published about the internal terror regimes of the Soviet Union or Communist China, but much on their achievements. Suez and Lebanon are considered major crimes; Hungary, if subject to critical comment at all, a misunderstanding between socialist countries of little concern to others. Other views I heard from "progressives": Syngman Rhee is a dictator, Mao is not; South Korea invaded North Korea very cleverly by making it appear that the North Koreans fired the first shots; the Americans provoked the intervention of the Chinese; and they used germ warfare in Korea. None of these positions was defended against the evidence of their falsity. They were merely repeated.

Those whom I knew best were the excep-

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tional adherents to democratic socialist and liberal views. Although these views were undoubtedly shared by many others, their number does not seem to be sufficiently great, or publicly articulate enough, to dispel the thick pall of conformism that hangs over the intellectual life of Japan. It is not a question in the first instance whether the views expressed are right or wrong—it is the dull sameness in the way they are held and the repetitiveness of the supporting illustrations, which hardly ever rise to the level of argument, that one finds so oppressive. The Japanese seem fearful at being out of step.

Again and again I discussed with students and progressives the position of the Japan Teachers' Union, whose leadership is brazenly manipulated by the Communist party, on teachers' efficiency ratings, on courses in ethical values, the quest for national symbols, the dangers of indoctrination—all matters of heated current public controversy. The sentence which has remained with me as the one uttered most often, as if by a wholesale plagiarism, was: "*Privately* I agree with you but publicly one cannot take such a position." If I could have called together all those who iterated this sentence and implied that they did not share the myths of the "progressives," they would have made a sizable group.

One naturally expects people of different countries, whose deepest sentiments have been formed by different traditions, to feel differently from ourselves about various things. "Old Japanese hands" wax eloquent on this difference, and the Japanese as a whole politely deprecate the notion that foreigners can understand them. This seems obviously true with regard to many situations in which Westerners can only grope their way. At the risk of merely displaying my naivety, I would say that it seemed to me once the Japanese had the *same* experience as people from other countries, once they were exposed to the *same type* of situations, the feelings they experienced seemed pretty much the same. This I found indirectly confirmed by the Japanese reluctance to hire servants who had worked in American households, or employ in business anyone who had held a corresponding position in an American firm. When I questioned my Japanese acquaintances about this, their vague answer about their countrymen having been "spoiled" finally reduced itself to a complaint that the servants and clerks expected, in effect, to be treated more like human beings than before. Similarly, Japanese women who go to the West on visits no longer feel on their return that the subjugation of women is both natural and inevitable. Even the elaborate scraping and bowing and ritualism which has come down from feudal times is regarded as excessive by many Japanese men and women. When it becomes a nuisance, they feel about it pretty much as any people would whose desire to get something done is hampered by unnecessary red tape and convention. The Japanese keep their resentments pretty well bottled up and, since the repressive regime of the Tokugawa Shogunate which lasted almost three centuries, have learned "never to show joy and anger in the face." But in earlier periods, judging by their literature, the Japanese seem to have been a more outgoing and uninhibited race. And even today, it is striking that the faces of the younger generation in the cities are more mobile, their voices louder, their gestures more pronounced than those of their elders.

I was particularly impressed, in my limited Japanese experience, with the matter-of-fact acceptance of glaring social inequality. This may appear natural in a country with strong feudal traditions but odd where the term "democracy" is a shibboleth. People were more concerned with what they lacked than with what others possessed. Strong jealousy would be manifested only toward those of the same rank or status. A subordinate in an office would be resentful at some co-worker's earning a little more than himself, but I would find no evidence of any indignation at the class of businessmen growing fat on their expense accounts. When I asked the intellectuals to draw for me their blueprints of Japanese utopia, they talked about alleviating poverty, but took it for granted that there would always be servants and wide differentials in living conditions. Trade-unionists, who, comparatively, are not so badly paid, seemed to me not conspicuously zealous about the deplorably low earnings and abominable working conditions of the unorganized, especially those employed in small enterprises where workers sometimes

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have no assured weekly day of rest. Yet on the professorial level, despite the enormous variation in the quality of educational institutions and the capacities of the teachers, there seemed little dissatisfaction with the relative equality of pay within the rank.

The acceptance of certain ways, even when traditional, is not a necessary sign of emotional acquiescence. Japanese women may be resigned to the extra-marital habits of their husbands (something much exaggerated by foreigners, Japanese friends tell me) but they do not necessarily like it. I recall a conversation I had with a young Japanese woman in the course of which what was Japanese seemed less important than what was womanly. She was a kind of unofficial guide in Kyoto and, like most Japanese girls who were avid to improve their English and careers, asked about opportunities in America. She confided to me that her family was arranging a marriage for her, and at my request she went into a detailed description of what happens in such a case. It came out that though, as she said, she did not particularly like the young man chosen for her, she could not conceive of begging off—there could be no reason she could think of that would be acceptable to her parents. "But if you had no valid reason in your parents' eyes and still refused to marry?" I asked. "They would feel I disgraced them. Neighbors would talk. I would have to be in a position to make my own living to stand up against their reproaches. . . ." Finally I suggested: "Suppose the person you had met through the go-between attracted *you* as you observed him, and suppose he seized an opportunity when you were alone to declare that he liked you or loved you very much. How would you feel?" At this she gave a little squeal of delight: "Oh! that would be different! That would be like a dream come true!" What is human here, and what is peculiarly Japanese?

The really fascinating and difficult question is not whether the Japanese *feel* like Western people but whether they *think* like them. That they possess the same modalities of feeling as Westerners, and the same possibilities for experiencing and reacting as we do, is evident. The young Japanese woman who wryly remarked to me about a Japanese scholar: "Professor X doesn't regard anyone as really human unless he is a graduate of the University of Tokyo" could have been an American co-ed. What she felt was the result of her professional experience with American professors and their unstuffy ways. The matter of thinking is more complex. During the first few weeks of my stay in Japan, whenever I would take issue with the position of my Japanese colleagues in the humanities and the social sciences on the ground that their position was inconsistent or that the evidence was insufficient or ambiguous, they would reply that I didn't see the truth in the particular case because I lacked the intuitive approach. They had something they called *kan*, whereas I was merely indulging in *kangaeru*, which I gathered meant discursive thinking. It got so that I came to believe that every time I poked a hole in their argument they would stuff it with *kan*. I wasn't prepared to take this seriously, since, in my discussion with the few Japanese philosophers who had been nurtured in the scientific philosophical tradition, I had no difficulty in communicating even when we disagreed.

Two things gave me pause. One was an article by a Japanese philosopher, H. Nakamura, who implied that the Japanese, because of the nature of their language, tend to think by a series of progressive equivocations incompatible with closely knit sequences of thought. "The ambiguous character of Japanese patterns of thought and expression naturally tends to prevent them [the Japanese]," he writes, "from thinking with logical coherence or consistency." This impression was reinforced by Edward Seidensticker's article "On Trying to Translate from the Japanese" (*Encounter*, August 1958) which makes one despairingly ask not only how foreigners can tell whether they understand the Japanese but how Japanese can tell whether they understand each other. The second thing which shook my dogmatic view about the essential unity of the human mind was a long talk with Dr. H. Yukawa, who asserted that the *kan* people were right and that he was conscious of the fact that there were things he thought and felt which he could not be put into any Western language. There were certain ambiguities in this position of Dr. Yukawa's which we managed to sort out in subsequent discussion. First, he did not mean that his

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way of discovering ideas was different from that of Western scientists. Everybody's way of discovery is different. It was the way of saying how he reached his ideas, and what they were, which was different. Some things simply could not be said in English, or in any other Western language. I asked him whether he meant that there were no precise equivalents, and whether there was anything in Japanese he could not say in English simply by using many more English words or vice versa. (This is not an uncommon linguistic phenomenon.) The usual complaint is that it takes a great many Japanese words to render the meaning of a few English ones. Some Japanese friends at Hiroshima University, to illustrate what they meant, asked me to guess what the following sentence from the 10th-century *Tale of Genji* by Lady Murasaki meant: *"Kimi nimo otonogomori sesase tamaeri."* This takes even longer to say than to read because of the stresses. According to my Japanese friends, all it means is: "He slept." And I had noticed that sometimes when I used a very simple English sentence in a talk, the translator would go on for a long time. Dr. Yukawa admitted that this was another difficulty, but not what he had in mind. There were things, he said, that he could think in Japanese which could not be rendered into English no matter how many words were used, and in the fields of science, too! Since no example could be given to somebody who didn't speak Japanese, we talked around the subject. In the course of the discussion, with the characteristic honesty of a scientist, Yukawa cited some facts which testified against his view. It was his impression, he said, that Chinese scientists did not feel about their ideas that some of them could not be expressed in English; also, it seemed to him that the younger Japanese scientists experienced no such frustration, at least not in the same measure.

If thought depends on language, and if the basic categorial structures of languages are profoundly different, then it might appear that the thinking, the minds, and the very notion of "intelligibility" among men cannot be the same. We know that when Aristotle drew up his table of categories which to him represented the grammar of existence, he was really projecting the grammar of the Greek language on the cosmos. The nub of the problem, however, seems to me to be this: granted different categorial structures of language, can men of one group acquire and learn to use the categorial distinctions of another group? The evidence seems to show that they can, and that here there is only a difference of degree between the Western languages and the Oriental ones. Even when people share a common language they sometimes claim that they have a personal meaning that cannot be communicated. This seems always to be a residual feeling tone which truistically can only be had, not known.

MY TENTATIVE conclusion is that to the extent that there is a common mind in the world, science and technology are preeminently illustrative of it, that tackling common problems in a common world both checks on and gives rise to standards of communicability, and that although some individuals in all races may be genetically incapable of grasping certain complex categorial distinctions, there is no evidence that where a language is too primitive to accommodate them, another language cannot be acquired in which they are present. With respect to Japanese I was much instructed by reading *The Autobiography of Yukichi Fukuzawa,* the founder of Keio University, who had so much to do with opening the doors of Japanese culture to Western thought against official and popular opposition. There is not much difficulty in identifying oneself empathetically with the author, whose feelings and thoughts do not seem alien to the Western reader even when he does not share them. Something opaque remains in any experience which has different historical roots, just as there is something opaque in the experience of any human being who is not a cipher. But not enough to sustain the fiction that because of their cultural differences the Japanese feel and think quite differently from those who see the rising sun in different longitudes.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

THE GREAT TRANSFORMATION

Ideas That Shaped Contemporary History

GEORGE LICHTHEIM

CONTEMPORARY history begins with the First World War. In 1914 European society was shaken by the earlier of two armed conflicts whose after-effects have now unsettled the whole globe. The resulting chain-reactions are still with us; they detonate in the intellectual sphere as decisively, if not as loudly, as in the arena of politics. Yet Europe, once their starting point, is no longer their prime focus. When we speak of today's crucial issues we are more likely to associate them with events in America, Russia, or even China. It is not inconceivable that in the lifetime of those still present, Europe will become a backwater. Few things would have seemed less likely in 1914. Europe in those days was not merely the greatest repository of power in the world: it was unchallengeably dominant in all spheres of thought. And within Europe the western half—England, France, Germany, Austria, Italy—maintained its traditional ascendancy over the regions to the east and south. Spain hardly counted; Russia took its intellectual notions from Germany or France; and the two last named shared an eminence which even their mutual rivalry could not seriously endanger; or so it seemed. Few people in those days were aware of the fragility of the whole structure. Even as late as 1930, on the eve of a second cycle of wars and revolutions, it was still unfashionable to suggest that the whole European era might be drawing to a close.

Yet signs of trouble had been noticeable since the closing decade of the 19th century. As usual they manifested themselves first in the intellectual sphere. There was a lessening of the optimism which accompanied the great expansion of power and productivity at the century's height. Liberalism gave signs of aging; so did positivism; even socialism could without apparent paradox be described in some respects as outmoded. There was a stirring among the younger generation, a tendency for intellectuals to waver between the opposing extremes of romantic nationalism and world-weary aestheticism. The war of 1914-1918, so far from producing these symptoms, merely gave heightened expression to them. Indeed its outbreak neatly intersected a period of reorientation which had begun some two decades earlier and was to continue for well over another decade after its close. It is only by 1930 that the now familiar modern consciousness—typified by the names Marx, Freud, Pareto, Weber, Wittgenstein, Spengler, Croce, Gide, Proust, etc.—appears fully developed. By then, too, it is no longer confined to Europe, let alone Western Europe: it has become a universal phenomenon—perhaps the forerunner of the first genu-

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BETWEEN 1890 and 1930 Europe underwent profound intellectual changes, reverberating throughout the Western world. Their significance is analyzed in the recently published *Consciousness and Society* (Knopf), by H. Stuart Hughes, well known to the readers of this magazine as a frequent contributor. The book is here discussed by GEORGE LICHTHEIM, a former associate editor of COMMENTARY.

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inely world-wide civilization to be realized.

This transformation of the modern mind is the principal theme of H. Stuart Hughes's important book *Consciousness and Society. The Reorientation of European Social Thought 1890-1930.** Let it be said at once that the work is important not only for its subject matter but for the manner in which it confronts the problem.

HERE is intellectual history, in the classical tradition, and written by an American historian whose understanding of West European thought is as penetrating as that of any European, with the added advantage of not being confined to a particular national framework. No European writer treating of German and Italian philosophic idealism, French, German, and Italian sociology, Freudian psychology, and modern literature since 1890, could have failed to over-stress the role of his own country at the expense of its traditional rivals. It takes an American to see Europe as a whole; to realize, e.g., that what happened between 1890 and 1930 concerned the Germans in precisely the same fashion as their neighbors, with whom they were twice locked in mortal conflict; just as it takes an American to make the point that during this crucial period England was pretty much outside the intellectual main stream (though not in mathematics or natural science, with which Professor Hughes is not concerned; nor in economics, which he treats rather cavalierly).

This clearly is a delicate point, and it may be worth quoting Mr. Hughes on his principle of selection: "The geographical area of study is Europe in the narrower sense—the original 'heartland' of Western society: France, Germany (including Austria), and Italy. Why precisely this area? Initially it may be argued that . . . an area approximating the one with which I am dealing has had a more intense European consciousness . . . [than] the countries on the West European periphery. Scandinavia, the Iberian peninsula, the British Isles—these have always seemed less self-consciously European. And as for Eastern Europe, its participation in the family heritage has appeared even more doubtful. . . . In the course of the study I hope to establish that it was Germans and Austrians and French and Italians—rather than Englishmen or Americans or Russians—who in general provided the fund of ideas that has come to seem most characteristic of our own time."

Now, however debatable this argument may be in general, it becomes self-validating in the case of a study restricted to areas of thought in which Germans, Austrians, Frenchmen, and Italians indubitably held the lead during the period under review. Even so it is possible to note some lacunae: Austria is represented principally by Mach and Freud, to the neglect of important political, legal, and social theorists; the virtual exclusion of England is sharpened by the contrast between the attention given to the "Vienna Circle" of logicians and the fleeting mention of Russell and Whitehead; Switzerland appears only in the context of Pareto's residence at Lausanne and Jung's opposition to Freud, although Karl Barth is briefly alluded to in the concluding chapter.

It is also possible to feel that in the account of French social thought a little too much has been made of Sorel, whose confused maunderings scarcely deserve the attention bestowed upon them by historians in search of a successor to Comte. (Alternatively, since Mr. Hughes elects to take him seriously, he might have traced his descent from Proudhon, another self-educated apostle of populist socialism.) Lastly, the author's indifference to economics has caused him to obscure the point of the argument over Marx with which he introduces his general theme: the really damaging criticism of the labor theory of value came not from Croce (whose understanding of economics was somewhat limited), or from Sorel (who hardly understood what all the fuss was about), but from Boehm-Bewerk; and the only impressive defense of the Marxian position was put up by the Austrian Marxists, whom Mr. Hughes

*Knopf, 433 pp., $6.00.

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does not discuss and indeed fails to notice.

This having been said—reviewers must be honest even with writings they admire—the point can now be made that Mr. Hughes has written the first integrated study of modern European thought which really goes to the heart of the subject; just as he is probably the first historian, at any rate in the English-speaking world, who has taken the trouble to trace the connection between the "crisis of values" in literature and the conceptual revision in the social sciences: thus making it plain that Croce, Max Weber, Bergson, Proust, and the existentialists were at bottom all concerned with the same problem. In the light of this achievement the reservations noted earlier count for very little.

IT MUST be clearly understood that we are dealing here not with another conventional study in Western European history wherein the "contributions" made by the several "national cultures" to some arbitrarily defined whole are given good or bad marks in accordance with the prevailing academic fashion; nor yet with a Spenglerian or Toynbeean essay on the world spirit as manifested in selected bits of historical evidence. Rather, Professor Hughes has tried to analyze the modern consciousness through a detailed and closely reasoned scrutiny of Europe's intellectual history between 1890 and 1930, i.e., during the forty years preceding and following the First World War. And he has done so by establishing an intricate network of internal relationships linking such apparently disparate phenomena as the assault on positivism in pre-1914 France, the growth of irrationalism in German literature, and the influence of Hegelianism and Marxism on the thinking of the Italian philosophers and sociologists of the period. In some cases the filiations thus established resist even the certainty that the theorist in question knew nothing of ideas which formed the counterpart of his own work, e.g., it seems that Pareto was unaware of both Max Weber and Freud, a circumstance greatly aided by his inability to read German; while Freud developed his thought without reference to the irrationalist philosophers of his age.

It is only toward the end of the period under review that something like a supranational integration emerges, with novelists like Gide and Mann popularizing the ideas of Freud, while "logical positivism," from being the discovery of a group of young men in postwar Vienna, becomes an international phenomenon. For the pre-1914 era the only comparable parallel noted by Mr. Hughes is the encounter between William James and Freud during the latter's visit to the United States in 1909, when James told the guest from Vienna that the future of psychology belonged to him. For the rest, the leading thinkers of the period worked in relative isolation, though Pareto corresponded with Croce and was at least aware of the French school in sociology. There was as yet no integrated European outlook, let alone a recognition that national exclusiveness in science was becoming outmoded. Characteristically, in 1914-18 most of the men under discussion—Pareto and Freud being the two most notable exceptions—not merely took up the conventional patriotic attitude, but made it their business to assert that civilization was best served by the particular national model to which their allegiance was due. Few went as far as Durkheim, who shared the super-patriotism of his fellow Alsatian Alfred Dreyfus (perhaps the most improbable suspect ever arraigned for treason, as Mr. Hughes justly observes); but all did their best, none more so than Max Weber, who not merely donned his reserve officer's uniform for the duration of the war, but after 1918 took an early opportunity to proclaim the need for the reconstitution of the German General Staff, then proscribed under the Versailles settlement.

Here a passing remark is in order. Mr. Hughes, in a laudable desire to be fair to ex-enemies, passes lightly over such episodes, or even (as in the case just referred to) ignores them altogether. Thus we get no mention of Weber's National-Liberal, i.e. expansionist rather than merely patriotic,

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outlook in foreign affairs; or of his notable conversation with Ludendorff in 1919, when he instructed the fallen war-lord on the meaning of popular leadership, in terms suggesting a somewhat Caesarist conception of democracy. The fact is that Weber's attitude remained authoritarian even after he had despaired of the Bismarckian Reich. It is possible that in time he would, like Thomas Mann, have mellowed into a liberal democrat; no one can say, for he died in 1920, having meantime helped to saddle the Weimar Republic with a presidential system that was to prove its undoing.

ON BALANCE such omissions do no great harm; the most one can say is that they give evidence of a conciliatory spirit which at times exceeds the bounds of mere fair-mindedness. Mr. Hughes clearly is of a very different temper from Jacques Barzun, who some years ago devoted large sections of a vigorous but ill-tempered and curiously parochial essay to the thesis that Darwin, Marx, and Wagner were very small beer compared with their French contemporaries Lamarck, Proudhon, and Berlioz. By contrast Mr. Hughes is inclined to think well of his protagonists, and in the case of Weber he is helped by his subject's truly impressive intellectual and moral stature. Indeed, Weber is one of the two heroes of this book, Freud being the other. Significantly, both belong to the German-speaking orbit. Had Professor Hughes carried his account forward to 1945, and at the same time rescinded what appears to be a tacit ban on theology, he would have found himself under the necessity of allotting similar importance to the German-Swiss Karl Barth. As it is, his volume opens with a consideration of the impact made on the "generation of 1890" by yet another German thinker, Karl Marx.

There is matter for reflection in this list, notably if one is not impeded by Mr. Barzun's blinkers. The fact is that during the period under review Germany and Austria held the initiative in promoting that intellectual transformation which is the subject of Mr. Hughes's study. For all that Pareto and Durkheim were able to do, the new sociology in the end emanated from Heidelberg, much as the new psychology made its way from Vienna, despite Freud's early studies under Charcot and Janet. In the philosophical sphere there was no single thinker to rival Croce in the degree of influence over the national life, or Bergson in fashionable success; but the decisive contest in the logical domain was once more waged in Central Europe (if England is left out of account). Lastly, the Germans held their earlier lead in the historical field, and even lengthened it by developing new categories of thought whose discussion constitutes one of the most fascinating chapters of Mr. Hughes's study. They were relatively weak in economics, though here the Austrian contribution made up for the deficiencies of the "historical school"; and it is arguable that despite Einstein and Planck they did not quite match the British achievement in natural science, which however lies outside the scope of Mr. Hughes's investigation. As against this, France could claim preeminence only in the field of literature, and Italy in none whatsoever.

The last point is perhaps debatable, depending on one's view of the three theorists whose doctrines Mr. Hughes summarizes in a chapter headed "The Heirs of Machiavelli": Pareto, Mosca, and Michels. Here the reviewer is obliged to part company with the author, though only for a short distance: one cannot help feeling that Mr. Hughes (who after all is the author of a book on Italy and clearly has a good deal of personal liking for Italian literature) makes a little too much of his chosen examples. He duly notes the antiquated character of much of the thinking that went into Pareto's *Trattato,* but he does so with evident regret and something like surprise that more is not to be got out of this elephantine study in political chicanery. He does his best to establish Mosca as a figure of more than local importance, but it is difficult to feel that he has succeeded. And as for Michels, whose early anti-democratic bias took him all the way to Fascism, can one really at this

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time of day take his "iron law of oligarchy" as seriously as he himself did? Of the three, only Pareto ranks as a major theorist, and of him Professor Hughes in the end candidly observes that "by his stubborn adherence to an outmoded philosophical position" he "denied himself a claim to greatness both as a scientist and as a speculative thinker." And again, "In one of his guises Pareto was the last of the system-builders, the residuary legatee of Comte and Spencer. In trying to establish what could properly be accomplished by their method . . . he had indeed proved how very little that was. He was a sufficiently penetrating critic to point out where Comte and Spencer had gone astray —but he was unable to recognize that it might be their whole approach that was radically at fault. A transition figure, too old to learn a new method, Pareto, like Sorel, could find no way out of his difficulties." But can the problem be thus disposed of in personal terms? Despite his half-French upbringing and his residence in Switzerland, Pareto was fundamentally Italian, and Italy's position was not sufficiently central to encourage a really relevant form of political thinking. Like Michels's "law of oligarchy," Pareto's critique of liberal democracy was geared to the unsolved problems of a relatively backward country; his indifference to whatever lay outside the Latin world mirrored a deeper parochialism in Italian life as a whole.

II

After these preliminaries it is time to come to terms with Mr. Hughes's central theme. Some salient points have already been noted: the modern consciousness of society was first elaborated by a group of West European thinkers around the turn of the century; at the same time, the new mode of thinking and feeling in literature, psychology, and philosophy, reflected a social transformation that gave rise to the wave of romantic irrationalism on the eve of the first world war; lastly, the crisis of the European nation-state, of which the 1914-1918 war was a violent expression, was also the crisis of the liberal culture to which the philosophers, sociologists, and artists of the period belonged; and the critique of liberalism-cum-positivism thus came to have political meaning. In Mr. Hughes's argument these three strands are interwoven with others, but in the main they indicate the trend of his thought, which aims at a synthesis of historical and philosophical concepts—i.e., at intellectual history in the Crocean manner. From the customary academic concern with "ideas" this approach differs principally in its awareness that new concepts are pointers to unsolved material problems, while materialism is held at bay by insistence on the autonomy of the spirit. This kind of balance can in practice only be maintained with the greatest difficulty—as the author is not slow to note, the resultant inner tension had its share in driving Weber nearly mad; in other cases it produces nothing more original than a collapse into eclecticism. Though he is to be felicitated on his ability to avoid these pitfalls, Mr. Hughes would be the last to claim that he has gone significantly beyond stating the problem, and then leaving it open. A passage in the introductory chapter on the leading thinkers of the epoch may be read as a partial description of his own mode of approach:

> In the shifting, transitional world of ideas in which they dwelt, the problem of consciousness early established itself as crucial. Another way of defining their intellectual epoch would be to suggest that it was the period in which the subjective attitude of the observer of society first thrust itself forward in peremptory fashion —hence the title of this study. . . . Thus the various thinkers with whom we shall be dealing were all in their different ways striving to comprehend the newly recognized disparity between external reality and the internal appreciation of this disparity.

And again:

> Regarded in this fashion, the intellectual labors of the forty years from 1890 to 1930 group themselves as a series of attempts to solve the specific questions that the new awareness of the problematical character of social observation had thrust to the fore. Such attempts . . .

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notably raised the general level of intellectual self-consciousness. . . . But this increase in sophistication also had its dangers. . . . The new self-consciousness could readily slip into a radical skepticism: from an awareness of the subjective character of social thought it was an easy step to denying the validity of all such thought—or, alternatively, to the desperate resolve to "think with the blood."

In considering these remarks it is worth bearing in mind the standpoint of their author, a procedure to which Mr. Hughes gives his implicit sanction in the opening paragraphs of his study. Philosophical neutrality being out of the question, it is relevant to ask where the historian has taken his stand, and here the reply is unambiguous: "The influence of Croce and Freud and Weber will be apparent on nearly every page. The implicit notion of what constitutes history is basically Crocean. Yet it is a Crocean attitude profoundly modified by psychoanalytic and sociological theory—things to which Croce himself was temperamentally hostile." The danger of eclecticism is partly met by a refusal on the author's part to let incompatible systems of thought run into each other. Thus he notes Freud's indifference to history, and Weber's rationalist blinkers in the psychological field. No attempt is made to suggest that an adequate synthesis can be constructed out of Crocean philosophy, Weberian sociology, and Freudian psychology, as they stand. The reader is thus left more or less in the same questioning posture in which Weber found himself at the end of his life, when—in Mr. Hughes's words—"he pushed all the contradictions to their point of maximum lucidity." Significantly, he adds: "It is for this reason that Weber sums up, more than any other single figure, the major themes of the present study." In short, what makes him the representative thinker of his generation was his recognition that the central problem was insoluble.

Now what was this problem? In a nutshell it can be defined as the question of meaning in history. Does history have a recognizable pattern, and if so, can it be brought into harmony with an acceptable theory of human nature and the human mind? Or must we be content with subjective interpretations into which our own predispositions enter, so as to leave us with nothing save a choice between different world views and different moral alternatives, all equally good or bad? For himself, Weber —as Mr. Hughes notes—rejected the relativist label, but he did so only because he was blind to the implications of his own thought. On this point the present reviewer agrees wholeheartedly with the author. There seems indeed no question that "in the sense of a point of view that denies any metaphysical certainty—whether of ethics or of historical truth—Weber can properly be characterized by this term. He frankly recognized the personal affective origin of his own convictions: he found no ultimate grounding for them. But he grew dizzy at the abysses that this line of reasoning seemed to open. We of the generation of his grandchildren, who have grown up in an atmosphere of intellectual and moral relativism, may find ourselves less frightened."

What was true of Weber was likewise true of his German contemporaries, Dilthey, Meinecke, and Troeltsch, except insofar as the last named was kept afloat by vestigial remnants of his inherited Protestant faith. Dilthey, who may be said to have originated the whole drift toward relativism by his investigations into the history of European culture, was sufficiently old-fashioned to hold fast, as a man, to the humanist values of the Enlightenment, while as a scholar he laid the axe to the foundations. Meinecke, perhaps the leading historian of the period, saved himself by maintaining a precarious balance between the old liberal cosmopolitanism and the new nationalism, which was also the new irrationalism. He died, aged over ninety, after the Second World War, having twice in his lifetime witnessed the debacle of what Marx a century earlier had contemptuously termed "the German ideology." Troeltsch became a Christian social reformer and a moderate supporter of the Weimar Republic, whose collapse he did

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not live to see. Others were more reckless. Long before Dilthey in the 1880's had begun to saw at the branch on which he was perched, Treitschke opted for nationalism and "realism" in its most vulgar and flamboyant form; in the following generation, with Nietzsche's philosophy to guide him, Spengler plunged straight into nihilism, and soon the number of relativists grew legion: if all choices were equally subjective, one might as well "think with the blood," or else assert with Spengler that Western culture was doomed. No wonder a man like Weber, who resisted this witches' sabbath with all the strength at his command, yet had no absolute certainties to guide him, felt that he was defending a lost cause.

THE trouble was not indeed confined to Germany, but for a variety of reasons it assumed a particularly dangerous form. Elsewhere, relativism was held in check by powerful vestiges of the classical humanist tradition. Or, if the romantic irrationalists won out, as they did in Italy under Mussolini, the opposition kept up a real resistance, rather than a mere façade of respectability. On this point Mr. Hughes, whose own allegiance goes to the Enlightenment (with a few obvious qualifications), might have done well to give more weight to such factors as the relative weakness of German liberalism ever since the later 19th century: to be exact, since the failure of the 1848 revolution and the subsequent Bismarckian unification. A liberalism whose political backbone had already been broken was in no condition to give a successful account of itself when the romantic challenge arose in a new form around 1900. The French, for all their political failures, did a great deal better; while in England, with its unshaken tradition of social stability, the conflict was muffled by compromise—which is indeed a good reason for excluding it from the purview of such a study. England throughout this period continued to reproduce the old conservative-liberal seesaw, while Fabian socialism presented itself as the legitimate heir of Millian liberalism: quite unlike Marxism, with its roots in Hegel and its head in the clouds. The real storm-center, as Mr. Hughes correctly perceives, was Germany (plus Austria, which was falling to pieces politically amidst a belated though genuine cultural efflorescence); and the problem is why in Central Europe as nowhere else matters were allowed to drift until the final disaster of 1933-45. But this question cannot be answered wholly in intellectual terms, unless one chooses to regard the defeat of liberalism in the 1848 revolution as being due to intellectual weakness. For the 1848 failure led straight to the bigger disaster in 1918, when the Social-Democrats re-enacted the fate of their liberal ancestors. Once the Weimar Republic had lost its hold on the middle class, the reactionary intellectuals who had always detested it saw the way free to subverting it, just as their counterparts in France did in 1940. But in contradistinction to Germany, France (as the Resistance movement was to show) possessed a liberal tradition which was genuinely popular, and this fortunate circumstance the French owed solely to their Revolution. It would seem that liberalism, like other philosophies, needs to be acclimatized by way of some kind of historical drama which unites it to the national tradition.

It was the misfortune of Germany in the 19th century that at the crucial moment she took the wrong turning. Had events fallen out otherwise, the "crisis of values" which struck German intellectual life after 1900 might have been more manageable. At least it need not have taken the catastrophic form it did in 1933, when philosophers like Heidegger, and political theorists like Carl Schmitt, gave the signal for the stampede into outright irrationalism. The spectacle of thousands of German intellectuals jumping down the sewers at the behest of such leaders has no counterpart in modern times—Italy was never really conquered by Fascism, and the Vichy regime was a stale absurdity. Definitely, there was something very sick in German society, but the sickness was not just an intellectual one.

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From a different standpoint it can be argued that Weber (and following him, Mr. Hughes) gives to the "value" problem a formulation which impedes greater critical awareness. The term itself is not altogether happy: "Values" that are "possessed" or "lost" by their owners suggest a relationship conditioned by exclusive individual ownership —a notion appropriate to *bourgeois* culture, but for that reason inadequate for theoretical purposes when the culture itself is called in question. (It seems odd that so few theologians have in recent years protested against the term "spiritual values": there is surely something rather inappropriate about it.) The romantic irrationalists who followed Nietzsche's lead were not altogether wrong when—like their socialist rivals—they denounced this whole outlook as class-bound, stuffy, and altogether unendurable. It is probable that "values" come to be regarded as such only when they are no longer spontaneously felt and lived; in other words, when the cultural integration is breaking down. In such a situation it does no good to posit abstract principles and demand acceptance for them, at the cost of instinctual spontaneity, since it is precisely this dichotomy which signifies the breakdown. Nor is the intellectual position saved by opposing moral ideals, in the Kantian manner, to an incomprehensible "reality." When Weber took this kind of stand, he followed in the wake of Kant, while his opponents—on the left as well as the right—appealed to Hegel, who a century earlier had ridiculed the Kantian moralism. But then Hegel believed that history had a meaning, and though his system has gone the way of all others, it is still arguable that he has something to teach the historian. At any rate, since his philosophy had by 1870 been expelled from the universities, he cannot be held responsible for the intellectual situation around 1914, when the only choice appeared to lie between romantic irrationalism and the bleakest kind of positivism. The fact is that when Weber and his contemporaries experienced "the problematic character of rationality in the Western world" (to quote Mr. Hughes), they did so in a manner peculiar to their generation—a generation brought up on the more or less unquestioning acceptance of certain principles which were called in question during their lifetime. These principles, in the last analysis, were those of the Enlightenment. The point is worth making because the currently fashionable academic neo-conservatism might lead one to suppose that what distressed the thinkers of that generation was the loss of religious faith. This is not so, and Mr. Hughes is to be commended, among others, for having made the matter perfectly clear: with the exception of Troeltsch, none of these men entertained theological notions (Bergson's mystical intuitionism did not represent a communicable religious faith). Here, too, Western Europe was a generation ahead of England (and several generations ahead of Russia, which was then just beginning to undergo a belated Enlightenment period).

The problem was precisely how the new secular, humanist, and positivist outlook could be squared with the urge for certainty, if one assumed that traditional metaphysics was outmoded. Hence the split between the positivists and those who refused to shelter behind scientific certitudes; hence also the growing identification of the right-left cleavage in politics with the clash between romantic irrationalism and scientific positivism. As the balance swung to and fro—for positivism made a come-back after 1918, when its enemies were temporarily discredited by the slaughter they had helped to promote—the leading European thinkers of the older generation who tried to straddle the issue were driven to a defense of rationalism which in the end assumed the paradoxical form of an appeal to reason in the name of duty: the intellect might not be able to comprehend the world, but it must on no account renounce its claim to preeminence. And similarly in ethics: even if the various value-systems were incompatible, one had to "opt" for one of them, and then stick to one's choice through thick and thin. But if this was the last word of Kantian rigorism—and Weber was fundamentally a

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Kantian—there were others who preferred to put their trust in "history," or in the outstanding individual, or in "the blood"; while some found their way back to religion, or went forward with the philosophers of "nothingness" and "the absurd." By 1930, on the eve of the second European catastrophe, neo-Calvinism, neo-Marxism, Fascism, and Existentialism all held greater attraction for the young than the doctrines of the generation whose active life had come to an end with the First World War.

III

A CRISIS of such dimensions was bound to express itself at all levels, from the most abstract to those closest to daily life. Above all, it was certain to be reflected in literature —a mode of expression situated halfway between abstract theorizing and concrete existence. But "reflected" is the wrong word: the change that came over European literature before and after the First World War did more than simply "reflect" something that was going on elsewhere. The altered literary consciousness was itself an important agent in transforming the prevailing outlook of the public—meaning by the latter term both the intellectuals and their following. Literature mediated the transformation that was going on in all spheres of life, and it did so not merely by popularizing the thought of scholars, but by confronting the latter with problems of which they had been unaware. Indeed, in the case of Nietzsche —whose work had terminated by 1890, but who was among the chief agents of decomposition throughout the succeeding period—one is hard put to say where literature ends and philosophy begins. His case is indeed unique; but even men like Bergson and Croce, who came much closer to the traditional image of the cloistered scholar, maintained a life-long contact with the literary and artistic work of their age; as for Sorel, it is scarcely possible to understand him unless one grasps the fact that someone was needed to interpret (or misinterpret) Marx, Croce, and Bergson to the litterateurs and students who flocked to his endless extempore lectures in the backroom of a Paris bookshop. More or less the same process went on in Vienna, the other intellectual capital of the period; though hardly in Berlin, where the literati were less numerous, and not on the best of terms with university professors.

If one excepts Vienna, the main center of this process of transmission was Paris; it is thus not surprising that Mr. Hughes devotes to its leading literary figures the bulk of an illuminating chapter entitled "The European Imagination and the First World War." What he has to say here gains in importance from his preceding analysis of the "crisis of values" in philosophy, quite apart from the intrinsic merits of his presentation, which are considerable: his customary lucidity is here united to a sympathetic understanding of modern French literature during one of its great periods. In the strict sense he does not offer literary criticism, and what he has to say about the work of Gide and Proust may not strike the specialists as particularly novel; but then the purpose of his analysis is philosophical rather than literary. (The same applies to his comments on Thomas Mann and Hermann Hesse). The manner in which the European literary sensibility, before and after 1914, was affected by the impact of Nietzsche, Bergson, and Freud is traced with an assurance which reveals full mastery of the subject; and though this approach is unfashionable with the "new critics" (who are no longer new), it discloses its fruitfulness to anyone interested in intellectual history ("the history of the enunciation and development of the ideas that eventually will inspire . . . governing elites").

Lest this formulation be thought narrow and snobbish, let it be said that the ideas of rebels and "outsiders" receive their full due. Indeed they alone are represented in strength, while the academicians are missing: thus Péguy gets almost a whole chapter to himself, while the laureates of the period are not even mentioned. But this is as it should be. Few French writers of this generation have had a greater long-term impact

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than Charles Péguy, who was almost totally unknown when in September 1914 he fell at the head of his column in a skirmish with the Germans outside Paris. Mr. Hughes does full justice to the peasant-boy who became a Dreyfusard and an unwilling ally of the left-wing intellectuals whom he personally disliked (therein resembling Orwell, with whom in other respects too he has something in common). He does not perhaps quite appreciate the tragedy of a man who was both a socialist and a patriot at the very last moment in European history when it was possible to share the naive popular view that war was a matter of defending one's country. A generation later this simple faith was no longer available to intellectuals, however many might join the Resistance movement. But this is to open the window on a later phase in the process. Rightly or wrongly, Mr. Hughes—save for some concluding remarks—ends his account in 1930. Simone Weil, who in some sense continued the tradition of Péguy, lies outside his horizon; as does Orwell, in whom the British "left" found their spokesman when Hitler at last forced a choice upon them. (The point is of importance if one happens to believe that England has now entered upon the stage of self-criticism which continental Europe attained a generation ago.) At any rate it can be said that in 1914, the French had not yet shed their belief in the absolute value of the nation-state, and the Catholic peasant-boy Péguy was as unselfconsciously patriotic as the anti-clerical Clemenceau who eventually led France to victory. Neither would have known what to make of the talk about "the crisis in values" which was beginning to affect the intellectuals.

The change came swiftly. By 1927, Julian Benda, who before 1914 had spent hours in the company of Péguy, listening to Sorel's interminable monologues, felt constrained to denounce the majority of his contemporaries for abandoning the values of the Enlightenment. *La Trahison des Clercs* is a limited and parochial tract (like most French intellectuals of his time, Benda had no knowledge of, and no use for, anything outside the Latin tradition, therein differing considerably from the present breed of his countrymen), but it retains its significance as a storm warning. With his Jewish and Dreyfusard background, Benda could indeed scarcely fail to notice that the atmosphere around him was changing. Rationalism was in discredit; Bergson had begun to toy with Catholicism; and some of the younger men were looking to Mussolini for guidance. In short, the crisis had begun to grip France (it is still doing so—witness the attraction of Soviet Marxism for some leading minds). Thirty years ago, Benda still tried to meet the enemy with the time-honored weapons of Cartesian rationalism: as Mr. Hughes notes, the names Croce, Weber, Freud are absent from his pages. By now this kind of provincialism has become impossible, which is another way of saying that the French have abandoned the attempt to live exclusively within their national framework. In this respect, too, the 1930's represent a watershed. No European country, not even England, now retains its former self-sufficiency: witness the watered-down existentialism of the "Angry Young Men," in whose plaintive writings the "age of anxiety" has found a provisional expression.

WHAT then is the precise significance of Mr. Hughes's study in intellectual history, which must be reckoned an intellectual event in its own right? Throughout its limpid pages there is discernible an undertone of worry which may without exaggeration or paradox be described as a distant echo of the upheaval he has portrayed. His own allegiance is to the Enlightenment, with the modifications made necessary by the impact of modern historiography, sociology, and psychology—typified for him by the names Croce, Weber, Freud. In personal terms, he appears conscious of a certain intellectual tension in himself due to the superimposition of German and Italian studies upon an Anglo-American and Anglo-French background. This cleavage gives point to his analysis of the European crisis which came to a provisional term in 1930, with the pass-

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ing or aging of the thinkers who had carried the main burden for some forty years. It renders him sensitive to problems normally slighted by historians confined to the traditional frame-work of Anglo-American empiricism and pragmatism. At the same time he is clearly not disposed to join the growing army of neo-conservative ideologists who have lately begun to import some of the more questionable fragments of the European inheritance into America—here and there in the name of a "realism" supposedly appropriate to a world power. Although the issue is somewhat delicately balanced in his pages ("Proceeding on the assumption that only a small number of individuals are actually responsible for the establishment and maintenance of civilized values"), he comes down without hesitation on the side of liberal democracy—not merely freedom for the social and educational elite, in the style of Mosca and Pareto, whose "liberalism" was quite compatible with qualified support of Mussolini.

Some questions remain: e.g., is it still plausible, in the light of the European experience he has described, to suggest that the principles (or "values") of the Enlightenment can be successfully generalized in the form of liberalism, given the fact that the characteristically liberal institutions (private property, the family, individualism in social life) are being eroded by the industrial revolution? And if liberalism cannot carry the whole burden, where is support to be sought without endangering democracy and freedom itself? Lastly, should the discussion of these issues be regarded as a sign that the "crisis of values" is beginning to make its appearance in the United States, so long the impregnable stronghold of the empiricist tradition? Perhaps if Mr. Hughes devotes a companion volume to the post-1930 period, we shall be in a better position to answer these questions. Meanwhile it must be sufficient to record that he has given us a work whose significance is not wholly contained in its value as a lucid and learned study of European intellectual life since 1890. In its own manner it represents a distinctive contribution to the debate on fundamentals recorded in its pages. One need not be a Crocean or a Hegelian to recognize that philosophy can make its appearance in the guise of history.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Jewish Tradition & Reverence

To the Editor of Commentary:

Thank you for the informative article on the etrog by Erich and Raël Isaac ("A Goodly Tree," October). What a pity, however, that it should have been marred. . . .

As a Reform rabbi, I well recognize the limitations of sheer tradition. However, it does not make me smile to read that ". . . Eleazar of Worms, a rabbi with a mathematical flair, scientifically [sic] and conclusively proved that the fruit of the commandment was the etrog by showing that the numerical value. . . ." *Gematria,* the use of the numerical value of the Hebrew letters for expounding the Scripture, was recognized as a legitimate method for one who believed that *all* wisdom could be deduced from the Torah.

"Rabbinic sleuths" looking into the etrog orchards would seem to paint these worthies as a pack of childish primitives.

To be sure, the last paragraphs of the article do represent an apologia for all the "wise-guy" statements that precede them. Is it necessary to be "smart" in order to be interesting? And what about those readers, Jewish or non-Jewish, who do not possess the corrective of a substantial Jewish background?

(Rabbi) Harold I. Krantzler
Massapequa Jewish Center
Massapequa, New York

Mr. Isaac *writes:*

A Reform Jew entered a *stiebel* on a sightseeing expedition and was shocked at the lack of decorum and respect shown. Later he mentioned his horror at what he had seen and heard to an Orthodox friend. The latter's explanation was simple. "You Reform Jews are visitors in your temple and are polite. We are at home and we do as we feel."

Need we press the point? To Rabbi Krantzler anything with the vaguest religious significance becomes a matter of reverence, and the less one understands about it the stronger the feeling in this direction should be. Rabbi Krantzler has a deep reverence for *gematria.* While it has had its place in Jewish life (in fact, is not unknown today) it was certainly never accepted as any tenet of Orthodoxy, and was indeed scornfully treated by impeccably Orthodox figures such as Ibn Ezra. Those who are part of the Jewish tradition themselves may well feel that *gematria* has never had any basic validity. Anyone who feels "at home" may well laugh at the absurdities of some of the members of his household.

I should deplore any attempt on the part of Rabbi Krantzler to turn Judaism into a sealed Temple of Sacred Artifacts.

Rabbi Krantzler conceives the end of the article as an apologia for previous "wise-guy" statements. This was not our intention. The end stemmed directly from these statements in showing that despite the excesses, vicissitudes, and absurdities to which, like most traditions, it has been subject, the etrog has a deep underlying significance to explain its continued vitality.

"Inverted Diaspora"?

To the Editor of Commentary:

While it is true that Alan Wood's ("I Sell My House," November) gives every indication of being a "liberated" man, yet it seems to me he missed the whole point of why he "suffered," and unfortunately makes the experience of living in an inverted diaspora meaningless. I have always thought that only illiterates made a distinction between Jews and human beings and vice versa. Or is Mr. Wood one of those magicians who can tell a Jew just by looking at him, or smell a Jewish suburb by walking through its streets? Or is he just plain sick about his Jewishness?

Michael Blankfort
Los Angeles, California

Prejudice

To the Editor of Commentary:

Mr. Petersen, in his article "Prejudice in American Society" (October), first states that social scientists tend to define prejudice primarily as a hostile attitude, then criticizes rather strongly this presumed tendency, and finally argues that prejudice should be viewed as a prejudgment based upon insufficient facts. Whether or not the majority of social scientists hold that prejudice is best conceived of as a

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hostile attitude I do not [know]. Further, I suspect that Mr. Petersen does not either. He quotes Gordon W. Allport of Harvard in a context which suggests that the latter accepts the purported majority view; it has been my impression, based to a large extent upon a reading of Dr. Allport's well-known book, *The Nature of Prejudice,* that he is one of the most distinguished upholders of the view that prejudice should be defined as a prejudgment. . . . [But] Mr. Petersen's major thesis [is] the conceptualization of prejudice. . . .

Mr. Petersen points out, first, that prejudice literally means prejudgment, and second, that a number of social scientists have forsaken the pristine purity of this definition. Although Mr. Petersen's observation is undoubtedly accurate, it is also irrelevant. Words . . . arise out of the need of men to summarize some aspect of life which is of relevance to them; that which may be relevant to men in general is not necessarily relevant to social scientists in particular. It is only natural for social scientists to give new meanings to the words they adopt. (One might plausibly argue that Mr. Petersen's discussion of the meaning of the term "minority group" is based upon his unwillingness to recognize such almost inevitable transformations.)

The basic question, however, is whether or not it is best, for purposes of scientific inquiry, to define prejudice in terms of prejudgment. Ultimately, of course, the justification for any definition rests upon its empirical and theoretical usefulness, a characteristic which is indeed difficult to predict. Yet to define prejudice as a judgment based upon incomplete knowledge is to imply that there are judgments founded upon complete knowledge. Merely to state the proposition thus is to reveal its absurdity. Mr. Petersen notes in his article that many of the generalizations made by the physical sciences, and all of those made by the social sciences, are probability statements. Thus an intellectual elite, possessing both sophisticated techniques for acquiring knowledge and the time to apply them, is far from basing its judgments upon the complete facts. If this is true of the elite, it is certainly true of others, uninterested in abstractions, with limited access to knowledge, and often faced with the necessity of making immediate decisions. The truth of these observations can be illustrated by use of one of Mr. Petersen's own examples of a relatively specific stimulus—trade unions. I would defy him to obtain any consensus as to either the function or consequences of trade unions in American society from, say, an economist, a sociologist, a psychologist, an employer, and a trade union official. In short, to define prejudice as prejudgment is to define it so broadly that the concept loses all meaning.

I would further argue that even if most judgments could be evaluated in terms of their factual bases, Mr. Petersen's definition would be of little use. A statement that Negroes are neither as intelligent nor as moral as whites is a good example of a probability generalization. Yet this statement, which if made by a Southern housewife would be indicative of prejudice, would indicate nothing of the sort if made by a Northern social scientist. In short, a statement, whether true or false, is meaningless by itself, and only acquires meaning when seen in the context of the personality making it. . . .

I would agree with Mr. Petersen that the definitions of prejudice prevalent in the social sciences are far from adequate. Even more, I would agree with some of his specific criticisms. At the same time an inadequate definition is not necessarily a useless one. Coherent, logical, and systematic definitions are the prerogative of relatively advanced disciplines. At present the social sciences can afford to, and indeed must, be satisfied with definitions that effectively, if crudely, outline phenomena, the study of which will prove to have both practical and scientific usefulness. It is my feeling that a definition of prejudice in terms of hostile attitudes grasps the essentials of the problem far better than one which emphasizes prejudgment. The recent notable advances which have been made in the study of prejudice by use of the former definition—of which *The Authoritarian Personality* is perhaps the outstanding example—would suggest that this feeling is not without justification. How warranted it is, of course, only time will tell.

STANLEY BUDNER
Bureau of Applied Social Research
Columbia University
New York City

MR. PETERSEN *writes:*

Let me suggest that Mr. Budner reread my article in the light of these further comments below, and perhaps he will find that we disagree less than it would seem.

1. I did not say, and I did not mean to imply, that all words should be maintained in the "pristine purity" of their etymological meaning. . . . [But I would not] propose that social scientists cry halt to their efforts to delineate more precisely the vocabulary of their profession. Such key words as *institution, middle class, culture,* and a host of others which are loosely used in common speech, do need to be specified in professional writings. This has nothing to do with whether we define *prejudice* as hostility. There is a good word to denote a person who feels hostility, namely, hostile; and

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if we define *prejudiced* as a synonym, for clarity's sake we might better dispense with it altogether. To use a single term to denote two concepts, or either one of them, is not a great improvement over lay speech.

2. I did not say, and I did not mean to imply, that "a majority" of American social scientists define *prejudice* as a hostile attitude. . . . I speak of a "tendency," and cite three examples and say that more could be cited. Other analysts of prejudice, indeed, define it as a prejudgment. Professor Allport in *The Nature of Prejudice* is one: but, in the report of the conference I referred to, Professor Allport said what I quoted him as having said.

3. "To define prejudice as a judgment based upon incomplete knowledge," Mr. Budner writes, "is to imply that there are other judgments founded upon complete knowledge." Several times I made the point that "the" facts are hard to come by, particularly in the social sciences; and if "complete" knowledge is to be interpreted literally, then it is unattainable in *any* discipline. Shall we, therefore, abandon the empirical base of modern science? How would Mr. Budner react to a physicist or a biologist who informed him that, because human knowledge cannot be perfect, therefore he will use a single term to denote both an empirical and a moral quality? We sociologists call ourselves scientists. If the designation is not a mere honorific, it means that the truths we establish in our field, partial and tentative though they may be, are our authority.

4. Mr. Budner writes: "A statement, whether true or false, is meaningless by itself, and only acquires meaning when seen in the context of the personality making it." . . . If a Southern housewife demonstrates certain attitudes toward Negroes, this is prejudice; but if a social scientist makes the same statement, it would indicate "nothing of the sort." I would say, in the contrary, that a social scientist can also exhibit prejudice, and a housewife is not inevitably prejudiced. The difference is not innate, but based on the social scientist's training to look at the facts and report them accurately. I propose that he continue to apply this training also to the area of group prejudice. . . .

5. I would agree that the justification of any definition "rests upon its empirical and theoretical usefulness," but I do not think that in this case one has to try to "predict" this characteristic. One need only look at the record, as to some degree I did in my article, to find that a tool is not useful if it confuses the empirical with the moral. We live in an age of totalitarian horrors, and the stance that *any* hostile attitude is bad has blinded some social scientists to a portion of the real world. Suppose the Southern housewife believes (as one might expect from such a person) that the Soviet Union is a totalitarian country, not significantly different from Nazi Germany; while social scientists tell him that it is a kind of extension of a social-welfare state. Must we accept the word of this "elite," or may we look at the facts of Soviet society?

6. If I considered *The Authoritarian Personality* too complex a subject to discuss in the article, I cannot make up this lack here. However, I would strongly urge Mr. Budner to read, or perhaps reread, the brilliant critique of it by Paul Kecskemeti in this journal ("Prejudice in the Catastrophic Perspective," March 1951).

7. In conclusion, let me spell out again the moral point I intended to make in my article. I regard prejudice as bad. I think it is the duty of social scientists to try both to establish empirical truths and to teach their students and the general public to base their judgments on as many of these truths as have been established. On the other hand, I do not feel that hostility is in itself a bad thing. Some persons, some movements, *are* evil.

Merin of Sosnowiec

To the Editor of Commentary:

I was greatly surprised to see that Philip Friedman, in his article "Two 'Saviors' Who Failed" (December) describes Moses Merin of Sosnowiec as having been ". . . an adherent of the Revisionists."

I myself lived in Sosnowiec and Merin was well known to me. He belonged to the General Zionists and was a member of their local committee. He never distinguished himself from his party fellows by sympathy for the Revisionist movement.

Joseph L. Klarman

New York City

Jewish Jester

To the Editor of Commentary:

As a footnote to Edouard Roditi's review of *Cinque Storie Ferraresi* by Giorgio Bassani (September 1958) it may be interesting to add that Ferrara also produced the first Jewish comedian known to us by name, and one of the earliest jesters to be represented in European art. He was the famous jester Scoccola, in the service of the d'Este. He appears in the fresco of 1470 by Francesco Cossa, in the Palazzo Schifanoja, Ferrara.

Ebria Feinblatt

Los Angeles, California

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

A Famous Heresy

THE GNOSTIC RELIGION: THE MESSAGE OF THE ALIEN GOD AND THE BEGINNINGS OF CHRISTIANITY. By HANS JONAS. Beacon. 302 pp. $6.00.

Reviewed by MOSES HADAS

IN ANY conflict it is the victorious party that writes the history, and, particularly if the issue is religion, the record of the opposition is either wholly effaced or survives only in the aspect given it by its enemies. So it has been with the Gnostics, whose doctrines could be reconstructed only from attacks made upon them by certain Church Fathers who wrote while Gnosticism was a present danger. After the 4th century when victory was complete the movement was ignored, until 19th-century scholars began to study it, mainly from the viewpoint of Protestant apologetics. In the 20th century new discoveries have made a fuller and more objective appreciation possible. Particularly valuable is the extensive Manichaean library in Coptic found in Egypt in 1930 and not yet fully published. "Barring the Dead Sea Scrolls," Professor Jonas writes, "this find is easily the greatest event for the history of religion which archaeology has provided within this generation."

In any major conflict—and Gnosticism was not, like other heresies, a localized or ephemeral phenomenon but widespread and persistent—the ideology of the vanquished is likely to infect the victors, and so it was in this case. Study of Gnostic teachings is therefore not merely the intellectual pastime of solving a particularly knotty puzzle but relevant to a fuller understanding of the orthodoxies which rejected it. But knowledge has been difficult to come by. The ancient sources are elusive passages in esoteric books the ordinary student never encounters, and secondary treatments are fragmentary and recondite. Professor Jonas's synoptic book, well organized and beautifully written, is therefore a pioneer effort, unrivaled and indispensable. It is at once a work of original scholarship by an acknowledged authority in its field, and so lucid in its presentation that the enormous learning which it exploits is never obtrusive. It is a feat of imaginative scholarship to combine scattered and tangled threads into a unified texture with patterns clearly revealed in their dark side and in their light, and it is no less a feat to clarify the strange patterns by relating them to more familiar ones.

Gnosis means "knowledge"—not knowledge in our normal sense of what is knowable, but paradoxically a knowledge of God who is by definition unknowable. Actually only a few groups called themselves Gnostics, but the complex of ideas which characterized these groups were characteristic also of many other groups, and the Church Fathers and modern scholars after them have correctly applied the term gnostic to the ideas wherever they occurred. The most striking element in the system was a stark dualism, so radical that it regarded everything outside the unknowable and alien God as the realm of the adverse forces. This meant that not only the world and man but the teachers and scriptures of current orthodoxies were devices to keep sparks of the divine in perpetual bondage. There is a fascination in the ruthlessness of the central conception and the uncompromising consistency of some of its ramifications, and there is a welter of fabricated and therefore absurd mythology.

IT IS easy to be swept away by the stark purity of the central conception, and it is easy to profess amused superiority to the essential irrationality of striving to know what is by definition unknowable and to the obfuscating imagery in which the irrationality is swathed. Professor Jonas wishes neither to praise nor to condemn but to facilitate understanding. He opens his book with a discussion of the intellectual and religious climate of the Hellenistic and imperial Roman world, with particular at-

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tention to modes of thought, East and West, and to the basis of their fusion in gnosis. He then proceeds systematically to a survey of the sources, definition of terms and tenets, clarification of Gnostic imagery and symbolic language, and analysis of Gnostic systems of thought according to Simon Magus, the "Hymn of the Pearl," Marcion, Valentinianism, and (most fully and sympathetically) Mani. A final section pinpoints the distinctive Gnostic views by contrasting them with traditional classical theory in such items as the cosmos, virtue, and the soul.

It is here that Professor Jonas's own innovation becomes clear. Earlier scholars had agreed with Harnack in seeing Gnosticism as "an acute Hellenization of Christianity." Jonas allots a larger share in the amalgam to Eastern, including Jewish, thought. There can be no question that Judaism was in fact involved, both in cause and effect. If nevertheless the Gnostics expressed hostility to orthodox Judaism, so they did to orthodox Christianity also, and so did Christianity (whose debt to Judaism is indubitable) express hostility to Judaism. But precise distribution of credit or debit in such a matter as this is, in the judgment of this reviewer, footless. Influence between East and West in the Hellenistic age worked like a pendulum; at each swing, as can be demonstrated in fields other than religion, the pendulum received in altered form matter which it had itself brought in on the previous swing. Indeed from one point of view Gnosticism is another instance of the centripetal forces of society which are purposefully made centrifugal by organized authority. But the disparate fragments of what was once an amalgam may still be traced, whether in the Cabbala or in the legend of Perceval and the Holy Grail.

Asian Society

ORIENTAL DESPOTISM. A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TOTAL POWER. By KARL WITTFOGEL. Yale University Press. 555 pp. $7.50.

Reviewed by A. V. SHERMAN

OURS is an age of second thoughts, and of going back to earlier writers for inspiration and new insights. Until a few years ago it seemed that knowledge progressed in linear fashion, each generation standing on the shoulders of its predecessors, and developing or refuting them at will. This blissful certainty has been seriously undermined by now, on both sides of the Iron Curtain; there is some awareness that problems and insights can sometimes disappear from view, even though they remain freely available on library shelves, and have to be rediscovered afresh, often painfully.

The problem of Asian society, or Oriental despotism as it used to be called, is a good example. The fact that the massive and important work under review in some respects sets out what was known a hundred years ago, throws light on the social psychology of the West, whatever it may or may not add to our understanding of Asia. Professor Wittfogel sets himself several distinct aims. He polemicizes against the modern Communist "line" which depicts Asian society in terms of "feudalism," "semi-feudalism," "landlordism," and other concepts borrowed from a property-based class analysis of Western society. He also shows that this fallacy is not confined to Communists. He discusses Asian government as a despotism based on direct exploitation of the people by the holders of absolute state power; and the steady retrogression of Marxist thought on this question, from the days when the young Marx held the orthodox liberal viewpoint until it was finally excommunicated by Stalin. The other main axis of the book is an attempt to show that Oriental despotism arose out of the needs of what he calls "hydraulic agromanagerial society," i.e. a society which carries out large-scale irrigation or flood-control works, and where the state plays an important part in economic life. It was from these "hydraulic centers," Professor Wittfogel holds, that despotism spread. He uses this theory to elicit the origins of Soviet Communism: "hydraulic bureaucratic despotism" was brought to Russia by the Tartars, set its stamp on Russian society, and the tradition of centralized despotism persisted through Czarist days to Communism, which he defines as generalized industrial state slavery.

All history-writing may be said to mirror contemporary views and preoccupations, but the work under discussion is consciously intended to serve as ammunition in a political struggle against totalitarianism, or absolutism in general, and Communism in particular. Like other crusading works of its kind it assumes that views which conflict with its own hamper the strug-

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gle for truth and justice. Professor Wittfogel therefore finds it difficult to examine them dispassionately. As a result, not only are we presented with a selection of facts to prove a particular thesis, but the writer falls into the very same errors of deterministic thinking for which he castigates his opponents.

His polemics against Stalinism are the soundest part of the book. But one doesn't have to look very hard to find evidence of distortion of social theory to meet political exigencies in non-Stalinist quarters as well. Professor Wittfogel is right in noting that on the subject of Oriental society and the role of the state it is not only the Communists who religiously held to the "belief than any form of avowedly beneficial state planning is preferable to the predominance of private property, a condition which modern sociological folklore deems most abhorrent. . . ." Although Western thinkers from the Greeks onwards were aware of the difference between the essentially despotic character of Oriental society and their own society in which freedom was prized and sought after even if not always sucessfully, yet this awareness, as Professor Wittfogel points out, seemed to fade away as the 19th century wore on. It then became the fashion to think exclusively in terms of Western social concepts; the Orient, which had appeared as massive, despotic, and permanent, seemed to be on the point of crumbling away, and it was generally assumed that Asia would have to adopt European modes of existence in order to survive. As Asia lost its independence, it also lost its independent image. The "ideological blackout" generalized and extended to the whole world the 19th-century English view of the state as an organ that acted primarily on behalf of society, or at least of sections of society, rather than as a social structure which could act on its own behalf.

In the case of the Marxists in general, and the Communists in particular, the blackout is blatant, and amenable to a fairly straightforward historical description and explanation. Marx had originally favored the concept of an "Asiatic mode of production," according to which Oriental society stood outside the sequence of classical antiquity, feudalism, absolute monarchy, and capitalism, which gave the West its own peculiar political history; Asian society had retained its old form characterized by the supremacy of the state whose income was based on taxation, ownership of the land, extortion, etc. But as Marx and Engels went further in turning from method to system, the idea of an Asiatic mode of society, where the state was the exploiter, became inconvenient. As time went on, they tended to ignore it.

Lenin in his turn began with a concept of Russia as a semi-Asiatic autocracy, where the development of private property in industry and land would be progressive. But this thesis could provide little justification for a body of professional revolutionaries whose aim was power; he therefore gradually moved round to a position where he identified the Czarist autocracy with capitalism, ignored the "Asiatic" consequences of total bureaucratic power, of which he had shown awareness earlier in his career, and succeeded in imposing a thoroughgoing despotism, compared with which the Czarist regime looked surprisingly mild. Stalin, who completed Lenin's work, finally excommunicated the "notorious thesis of the Asiatic mode of production" bell, book, and candle. Asian society was decreed to be "feudal," "semi-feudal," or "patriarchal," etc. Indeed, an objective description of Pharaonic Egypt, with its state-owned land, state-managed agriculture and crop-collections, state trade, and emperor who was the semi-divine head of priests, bureaucrats, and army, would have sounded too familiar to Soviet citizens.

Professor Wittfogel gives a relentlessly documented account of how Communists and fellow-traveling historians and Orientalists in the West changed their line to fit in with that of the Soviet Union. He shows in particular how Professors Gordon Childe and Owen Lattimore, who had previously been firm adherents of the theory of the "Asiatic mode of production," dropped it like a hot brick when the line changed, and—without giving any explanation for their changed position—adopted the new Stalinist line which spoke of the East as ruled by "feudalism," landowners, etc. A recent work by a British writer, Doreen Warriner, a veteran apologist for Communist regimes and more recently a fervent propagandist for Nasser (published interestingly enough by the Royal Institute for International Affairs in London, whose endemic Arabophilia now gives it a common meeting ground with the extreme left) defends the use of the term "feudal" to describe Egyptian land tenure prior to the 1952 coup, on the grounds that ". . . whatever the system is called, it ought

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to be abolished; and the use of the term 'feudal' makes political good sense."

The effects of the ideological blackout stretch far beyond the periphery of the Communist world, though Professor Wittfogel perhaps exaggerates its extent: writers as influential as Talcott Parsons, Eugene Staley, Hoselitz, and others, have long been warning against it, often with specific analysis of the harm which it has done in Asiatic countries themselves. Professor Wittfogel's own theory, the "hydraulic thesis," however, fails to fit many of the facts as we know them. For one thing, though one can find examples of active despotism such as Egypt, one can also find many passive Oriental despotisms, which have the full despotic apparatus enumerated by Wittfogel (army, prisons and executioners, absolute and capricious power, eunuchs, spies, centralized administration, etc.) but carry out no "agromanagerial" or "agrobureaucratic" functions. They follow rather the Benthamite motto that the less government the better, and content themselves with maintaining army, police, courts, sufficient road-building to allow their armies and officials to move about, and possibly some religious endowment. Their source of income is the traditional "Asiatic mode" of extortion through taxes, land-grants, confiscation of the property of "traitors," bribes, sale of offices, tax-farming, etc. Passive despotisms of this kind can be found throughout history in Monsoon Asia, in the Ottoman Empire during most of its existence (most water-control in the Ottoman Empire was allowed to fall into complete disrepair, but the despotism kept abreast of changing techniques), in Persia, North Africa, and Central Asia, at least from the time of the Mongols, among others. Earlier Mediterranean civilizations, in Iberia, the Levant, Thrace, and Anatolia, also fit into this pattern.

Since Professor Wittfogel has gone back to Marx and his contemporaries for his insights into Oriental despotism, it is a pity that he did not go back a little further. Hegel, and before him Montesquieu, in analyzing various kinds of Oriental despotism, realized that the system could not be explained in terms of institutions alone, but that these institutions reflected a certain outlook. The Oriental despot stood at the apex of a despotic society, whose members were "crouching and abject before a victor and Lord . . . recklessly barbarous to the vanquished and the subject," demonstrating a "servile consciousness" . . . "no sense of personal independence with which a state of despotism could be contrasted"; hence there was ". . . a history of reigning dynasties but not of peoples; a series of perpetually varying intrigues and revolts—not indeed of subjects against their rulers but of a prince's son against his father, for example. . . ." Something in the Oriental personality, these thinkers saw, made the Oriental capable of being either a slave or a despot (or even both), but never a free man.

Even in Oriental countries where a modern administration has been introduced, with a bureaucracy, armies, managers, foremen, etc., the same characteristics permeate the new framework. The foreman charges a "kickback" from the workers, the clerk expects a bribe, the sergeants and officers exploit their recruits for homosexual purposes—not as isolated incidents which are discovered and dealt with as might happen anywhere, but as the regular accepted rule.

The source cannot lie in economic life, since Oriental despotism has existed at many economic levels, from the lowest to levels considerably higher than those in Europe when it was already developing free institutions. Nor can these cultural features result from the institutions themselves, since during the millennia of Oriental despotism the institutions have been destroyed time and time again, yet they always reproduce themselves. We shall have to study the character of their people much more thoroughly, with all the new aids at our disposal as well as the old ones; their family structure in particular, where the character is formed, needs attention. The East seems to display a cyclical history: savage hill-tribes or nomads overrun fertile areas which have become corrupt and incapable of self-defense. They set up a new vigorous dynasty and ruling class, then in the course of time they become what European writers used to call "corrupt, effeminate, and enervated," and the next invasion is due. It is also true that with many of the primitive mountain folk (Kurds, Berbers, etc.) women have a higher status, family life is free and affectionate, whereas in classical Moslem civilization women have the lowest status, being little more than property and the object of sexual jealousy and insecurity on the part of their husband-owner (Wittfogel notes similar institutions in China,

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with the harem and the eunuch). Such women can play no positive part in the character development of their sons, only a corrupting one. The question is worth further study; it is more accessible to research than Professor Wittfogel's assurance that despotism must have begun in hydraulic areas and moved outwards.*

PHILOSOPHICALLY, Professor Wittfogel's thesis is likewise questionable. It assumes that since large-scale water works are economically necessary, and despotic power is necessary for their institution and maintenance, necessity—in the Hegelian sense—realized the despotism by some "hidden hand." But from the point of view of historical sequence, despotism must have preceded water-control works in order to implement them; therefore its source must be sought elsewhere.

Now one can find cases of post-medieval Oriental empires which displayed considerable similarity to 17th- or 18th-century European monarchies, yet their subsequent development was quite different. Serious historians are still at a loss to say why. Many explanations have been offered: now the "fruitful tension between church and state," the special character of the German tribes, the haunting influence of Greek and Hebrew prophetic values in the West, the discovery of the New World, the stultifying effect of Islam in the East; all of these have some value, but it is doubtful whether any one of them gives a complete answer and absolves one from further and deeper study of the people who made up society. At all events these explanations tell us more than the "rainfed" theory.

Professor Wittfogel is convinced that we ought to give an answer to the Communists as complete, all-embracing, and certain as their own, on the problems of Oriental society and despotism in general: "In a crisis situation, any theoretical vacuum, like a power vacuum, invites disaster." We have to prove the Communists wrong when ". . . they hold us incapable of producing big and structured ideas. . . ." He proposes, therefore, to emulate "the trailblazers of modern thought . . . the Newtons, Montesquieus, Adam Smiths, and Darwins . . . who . . . provided new interpretations of the world which were as spontaneous as they were coherent, and as bold as they were competent." These aspirations leave their marks on his writing. His section which sets out to prove that the dominant factor in Russian political and social development was Mongol influence, involves selecting any bits of fact or speculation which can be made to fit the theory, and ignoring the broad stream of evidence showing Russia's European heritage and the similarities between her development and that of the European monarchies, as well as the differences. (He forgets, incidentally, that the Czar was cousin to most European monarchs.) This leads him to introduce as evidence Max Weber's remark that the Czarist police ". . . show Mongol deceit and cunning" (the German police, one supposes, were above all this) and to cite the readiness of the Czars to have a rival or a dangerous vassal murdered as proof of an Oriental nature, as though English history of the late medieval and Renaissance period did not give us equally lurid sequences.

PROFESSOR Wittfogel deserves great credit for having raised the problem of the character of Asiatic society, in the face of tendencies to put its manifestations down to "backwardness" or "feudalism," with the corollary that institutional and technical changes alone will not be sufficient to "modernize" it. Present setbacks in regions like the Middle East and Indonesia lend urgency to the problem. He is also right

*Earlier social thinkers based themselves as best they could on observation, travel, and historical knowledge; their method was largely philosophical and speculative, but they never lost awareness that they were dealing with human beings, whose character and institutions were intertwined. Unfortunately, from the late 18th century onwards, social thinking began to come under the influence of the natural sciences. This influence was to show itself first of all in political economy, then in political science, sociology, and the rest. It was marked above all by the desire to find general, universally valid laws of human development, which could be made applicable to all times and places. This method of thinking has endeavored to explain (or explain away) personality in terms of social and economic institutions; in fact, "scientific" has come to mean the exclusion of the human being from social studies, and the belief that one can understand broad social processes without understanding the people who compose them. For such an approach the idea of "national character" in general, and "Oriental character" in particular, is taboo, even immoral; the active role of values, of "faiths which move mountains," has to be explained away in terms of economic change, irrigation, development of transport, etc. It is this scientism which has expressed itself in the search for cure-all answers and inevitable sequences of human development.

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when he stresses the need to pin-point and answer Communist misrepresentation on this question. But the important questions he raises should serve as a reminder that we are a long way from knowing what we need to know about society and its history.

Numismatic Neurosis

THE HISTORY OF COINS AND SYMBOLS IN ANCIENT ISRAEL. By WOLF WIRGIN and SIEGFRIED MANDEL. Exposition. 264 pp. Illustrated. $7.50.

Reviewed by STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN

As THE title suggests, here are two books stitched together with the seam visible. Wolf Wirgin's, consisting of the first six chapters, is a work of numismatics, a radical reattribution of some of the anonymous and ambiguously inscribed coins of ancient Israel. The seventh and last chapter, by Siegfried Mandel, is a study in iconography called "Fertility Symbols on Ancient Jewish Coins."

Wirgin's chapters involve three major reattributions as well as some minor ones. The famous silver shekels, with a chalice on one side and a triple bud on the other, reading "Jerusalem the Holy" and "Shekel of Israel," in recent times attributed to the first revolt against the Romans from 66 to 70 C.E., Wirgin attributes to the revolt of the Maccabees against Syria some two centuries earlier. The tetradrachms portraying the Temple with two Torahs inside, reading "Jerusalem," "Simon," and various years "of Deliverance of Israel" (as well as the other coins celebrating "Freedom," "Redemption," or "Deliverance" of Jerusalem or Israel), almost universally attributed to the Second Revolt of the Jews from 132 to 135 C.E., Wirgin credits to King Herod in the last years B.C.E. The tiny bronze coins reading "of King Alexander," customarily attributed to King Alexander Jannaeus *c.* 100 B.C.E., he associates with King Alexander the Great of Macedon two centuries before. Wirgin's other redatings and reattributions are less striking. An appendix entitled "A New Key to the Dating of Ancient Jewish Coins" gives them in full, along with the contrasting sequence numbers in Riefenberg's *Ancient Jewish Coins.*

The banner under which Wirgin performs these feats is one with which no one could quarrel: "In analyzing ancient coins, our attention must not be diverted from the main task, namely to seek meaning from the peculiarities of each issue rather than to attempt to impose a strait jacket of preconceived ideas upon them."

Sometimes, however, his methods do not seem quite so inductive as his slogans. On occasion, as in the case of the coins he credits to Herod, he moves within a few pages from conjecture ("One of the possibilities which must be taken into consideration is that the Hebrew coins inscribed 'freedom,' 'redemption' and 'deliverance' were not war and siege or emergency issues at all") to certainty ("The failure to make this vital distinction has led numismatists to attribute wrongly the coins of freedom and redemption to a period of *political* revolt"). Wirgin sometimes seems rather high-handed about dates, turning "years" inscribed on coins into Great Years or *shmitta* cycles seven years apart, or resourcefully choosing whichever of several dates will make his cycles work ("If the beginning of Agrippa's rule in the Jewish provinces of Galilee and Judea is viewed as pertinent, instead of the date he was installed in office, then the period of his government coincides exactly with the dates marked on the coins").

Some of his arguments seem contradictory and evasive, and even in terms of his own theories, they sometimes fall into absurdity. Thus, taking the "Simon" on Temple tetradrachms to be Simon Maccabeus instead of Simon Bar Kochba, he writes, "It does not make sense when the picture of the Temple and the inscription 'Simon' are juxtaposed," although Simon Maccabeus was one of the Temple's cleansers, and succeeded his brother Judas as its high priest. One of Wirgin's arguments, that the Jews under Herod manufactured counterfeits of Roman coins to use as blanks for over-striking with their own coinage, although supported by numismatic evidence, seems so intrinsically unlikely and uneconomical an assumption that some simpler explanation must be available.

Stylistically, Wirgin's chapters are rambling and repetitious, their structuring a tissue of "it is likewise conceivable," "yet it seems incredible that," and "to come back to our theory." There is no mention of a translator, so that they were presumably written in English, but it is the English of dialect comedy. Here are examples:

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"This plunged Aristobulus into repentant moods and helped shorten his own life."—"Finally, worn out by campaigning and seizures of fever, Alexander died in 78 B.C., honored by most of the populace but placed by the Pharisees on the calendar of memorable dates of joy in commemoration of his death."—"Ultimately, we dare say, these coins will be of similar importance to historians as the famous Dead Sea Scrolls."—"Herod's gift of tongue and gold . . . caused Antony to vest full political power in the Idumean brothers."

As for Wirgin's theories themselves, an amateur numismatist like this reviewer cannot properly evaluate them, that being the task of Wirgin's peers. Having noted what seem to me weaknesses of method and logic, I should fairly note that several arguments seem quite convincing. Among them are the principle that well-struck coins celebrating a revolt are more apt to be later commemoratives than field coinage, and evidence that some recent shekel "finds" have features suggesting that they were dug up out of dealers' cabinets rather than out of the ground. Nevertheless, for what the statement is worth, Wirgin's thesis reminds me less of numismatic science than of Immanuel Velikovsky arguing universal cataclysm, Joshua Podro rewriting the Gospels with Robert Graves, or Solomon Zeitlin insisting that the Dead Sea Scrolls are medieval. There seems to be a type of contemporary scholarship hard to distinguish from obsessional neurosis.

MANDEL'S chapter, its authorship clearly identified by his statement in the introduction that Wirgin "suggested that my studies of symbolism could be useful in approaching numismatic problems from another vital direction," is a very different sort of thing. It is Mandel's contention that the symbols on ancient Jewish coins are pagan fertility symbols transformed and reinterpreted: that the shekel's chalice and buds derive from an anchor and trident on the cast coins of Greek Italy; that *lulab* and *ethrog* were originally sex symbols; etc. Mandel has a good eye for resemblance and makes a fairly strong case, citing the pagan divinities and figures from mythology discovered in the excavation of such early synagogues as those at Chorazin and Capernaum. His argument is weakened by the habit he shares with Wirgin of treating the Bible as though it were history rather than "sacred history." His references to Greek mythology seem extremely muddled: he confuses the murder of Dionysus by the Titans with the similar murder of Orpheus by a group of human Bacchantes, and he seems to think that Amalthea was Dionysus' mother. On the narrow subject of the specific symbols on ancient Jewish coins, however, it would seem impossible to dismiss his evidence, and he is willing to meet religious objections at least halfway: "The process of adopting and modifying foreign symbols or ideas should not be regarded as mere counterfeit or imitation; in many instances it became a new, creative act with broadened religious concepts."

Origin need not be essence, we readily agree. Nevertheless, resemblances can mislead, as we note from a terribly funny passage Mandel quotes from Plutarch's *Symposiacs*, in which Plutarch concludes from unimpeachable evidence that the Jews worship Dionysus:

"The time and manner of the greatest and most holy solemnity of the Jews is exactly agreeable to the holy Orgies of Bacchus, for that which they call the Feast they celebrate in the midst of the vintage, furnishing their tables with all sorts of fruits, while they sit under booths or tabernacles made of vines and ivy; and the day which goes immediately before this, they call the day of Tabernacles. Within a few days afterward they celebrate another feast, not darkly, but openly, dedicated to Bacchus, for they have a feast among them called *Kradephoria,* from carrying palm branches, and *Thyrsophoria,* when they enter the temple carrying thyrsi. What they do within, I do not know; but it is very probable that they perform the rites of Bacchus. First, they have little trumpets such as the Grecians used to have at their Bacchanalia, to call upon their gods withal. Others go before them, playing upon harps, whom they call *Levites*—whether so named from *Lusios,* or rather from *Evios,* either word agrees with Bacchus. And I suppose that their Sabbaths have some relation to Bacchus; for even at this day, many call the Bacchi by the name of *Sabbi,* and they make use of that word at the celebration of the orgies of Bacchus."

Altogether, a stimulating book. Relative to the great sweep of Jewish history, we realize how few the coins are and at what disconcerting times they come: when King Aristobulus is converting the Galileans to Judaism with fire and sword, or Alexander Jannaeus is crucifying his countrymen *en masse*. Before the 2nd century B.C.E., and from the bloody sup-

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pression of the Second Revolt in 135 C.E. to the foundation of modern Israel in our century —thus for more than nine-tenths of Jewish history—there are no coins at all. Perhaps a culture does better to lay up its treasure in heaven, where moth and rust do not corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal. The latest Israeli commemorative, in gold (the ancient Israel coinage, befitting a poor country, had no gold and little silver), reproduces on one side a triumphant Roman coin proclaiming "Judaea Capta," and answers it on the other side with "Israel Liberata." Surely some Mandel of the future will point out that its palm tree design is borrowed from Tyre and bears witness to a phallic Astarte cult, and some future Wirgin will misdate it by centuries.

History, "Life" Style

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION. By ALAN MOOREHEAD. Harper. 301 pp. $5.00.

Reviewed by JOEL CARMICHAEL

THIS book has had an unprecedented success, having been selected as a Book-of-the-Month after being run in an abridged series of installments in *Life* Magazine. An illuminating case history of bureaucratic-cum-commercial ax-grinding, it demonstrates how easily a tendentious view of politics, as a coherent explanation of "what happened," can be grafted on to sources smoothed together by a popular style and the whole swallowed painlessly by professional reviewers—to say nothing of the larger public—forty years after a revolution which has come to engulf one-third of the human race. Though it cannot be taken seriously as history, it is of interest as an illustration of that Western combination of moral smugness and intellectual obtuseness which has enabled the Soviet leadership, despite its own radical shortcomings, to win many strategic victories.

The Russian Revolution has no scholarly ax to grind: It does not even reflect the interminable pedantries of what has come to be known as the field of Sovietology, for the author claims no particular expertise in Soviet affairs; his reputation is that of a popular journalist. In this book he applies his journalistic competence to the task assigned to him by Time, Inc., in conjunction with the "Possony group," described as a team of "students" headed by Dr. Stephan T. Possony, professor of international relations at Georgetown University and an Air Force consultant. Mr. Moorehead's "Preface" and "Notes on Sources" credit the Possony group with having "provided the main foundation" of the book, through their intensive study of a mass of hitherto unexamined documents in the German Foreign Office Archives captured during the Second World War.

Dr. Possony's point of view, with which Mr. Moorehead's book is supposed to be informed, revolves around the theme of "German gold," a theme now revived for the umpteenth time since 1917. The Bolsheviks, the charge goes, were among other things German agents, and their political success is attributed to their possession of German funds. What is astonishing about the resuscitation of this ancient piece of nonsense is not the degree of plausibility worked up by Mr. Moorehead's conscientious efforts; there is, after all, not much difference in principle between Lenin's accepting Ludendorff's train and his money. What baffles one is a point of view which can consider this thesis of any *practical* use, even as propaganda, forty years later in a world totally changed by Soviet expansion.

Obviously, even if it were to be proven incontrovertibly that Lenin took money from Ludendorff, this would seem to be of concern only to Russian Social Democrats, for whom Lenin's personal integrity is, understandably, an issue of great moral significance. But outside this tiny circle, why should it be of any interest today? Of scholastic interest, undoubtedly, and of human interest in general, but why should *Life* Magazine think it is interesting enough to warrant the quarter of a million dollars it is reputed to have spent on the magazine installments alone? Surely in any case the issue would only be whether Lenin changed his *program* to please the German General Staff. But no one has ever maintained this; and so, even if Lenin's taking German money could be proved up to the hilt, all it would really show is that Lenin had far clearer political vision than Ludendorff: i.e., Lenin won and Ludendorff lost. It tells us nothing that would enable us to understand the triumph of either the Bolsheviks in 1917 or of their successors later on. Time, Inc., has, in short, sacrificed political comprehension on the altar of provincial blindness in hiring Mr. Moorehead to construct a so-called history of the revolution around this preposterous theme.

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But the book fails to do even this; some amusement is afforded by the incoherence that paralyzes the book intellectually because of the author's inability to reconcile his sources. In spite of Mr. Moorehead's solemn gratitude to Dr. Possony's revelations after "ten years of study," it turns out that Mr. Moorehead has simply pinched nine-tenths of his material from perfectly accessible, indeed standard, source books: viz., Trotsky, Sukhanov, Bernard Pares, John Reed, Bruce Lockhart, etc. In fact, to the extent that the book has any structure, it is derived from Trotsky (largely unacknowledged) and Sukhanov (partially acknowledged). Dr. Possony's laborious researches over the "past ten years" are, in fact, limited to the contents of chapter eight and part of chapter eleven, which is where the attempt is made on a documentary basis to link Lenin to the German treasury. Here the evidence, despite rhetorical embellishments, is negligible. Mr. Moorehead has thus had a painful job to do from a purely technical point of view: namely to reconcile Trotsky's analysis of events with what Dr. Possony and Mr. Luce would like to see. It is a thankless business, and its inherent difficulties lead to an effect of high comedy. The Romanovs, for instance, are systematically sneered at, which from a primitive anti-Bolshevik point of view might seem rather mysterious, until one recalls that it follows quite naturally from the author's basing his account of the Russian revolution on Trotsky. (*Life* Magazine itself, still more mysteriously—actually, of course, irresponsibly—displayed a great deal of anti-Tsarist, indeed quasi-Bolshevik, propaganda in the illustrations it used to depict conditions under the *ancien régime*.)

Here is one example that illuminates Mr. Moorehead's method of amalgamating his contradictory sources: in discussing the signing of the Brest-Litovsk treaty, which took Russia out of the war, Mr. Moorehead writes (as it appeared in *Life*): "It is now known, from the German Foreign Office files, that some bribery was involved here. In any event, early on February 24th, Lenin and Trotsky sent a message to the Germans saying that they would sign." The words "in any event," simple as they seem, are a *tour de force* of English style. Mr. Moorehead is not exactly saying that Lenin personally took the money; on the other hand, since Lenin and Trotsky were the ones who made the decision, what role could "bribery" have played? But it would clearly be foolish to demand an exegesis of this technique. Some way had to be found of fusing Dr. Possony's "ten years of research" with the largely pro-Soviet sources used by Mr. Moorehead, and rhetorical assimilation was the one method possible.

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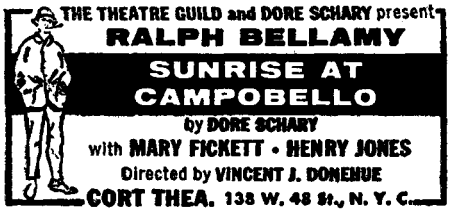
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An even more vivid illustration of the simple-mindedness of Mr. Moorehead's approach is his account of the fateful Bolshevik decision to make the October insurrection. I happened to be looking at this particular passage during a conversation with an old Menshevik, who was puzzled by the attitude of a certain university press which had returned his lengthy memoir with a recommendation that it be rewritten in the "American style."

"Tell me," said my Menshevik acquaintance, "American style—what does it mean?"

My eye fell on Moorehead's description of Lenin's secret meeting with the Central Committee of the party in Sukhanov's apartment, a literally world-shaking event:

"The debate continued for ten hours. Lenin spoke up for an immediate rebellion and finally demolished all his opponents except Kamenev and Zinoviev. . . . In the end Lenin had his way. . . ." Kamenev and Zinoviev's only arguments are described as a "feeling" that "the party was not yet strong enough." One easily imagines the vehemence of the argument, with the tempestuous talkers who were present, but can the issues really be reduced to this blandly grotesque platitude? If they were that simple, what could Lenin, Trotsky, Kamenev, Zinoviev, and all the rest have been talking about so long? Why did Lenin have to harangue the others? What objections were raised by those who wavered? On what grounds did Kamenev and Zinoviev venture to oppose Lenin? The whole point of their differences, after all, lay

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in Lenin's break with previous Socialist doctrine; with the support of Trotsky, a newcomer to the Bolshevik fold, he managed to smother or circumvent opposition. But how? And why?

"You see, this is the 'American style.' You must leave out everything."

I have the impression he thought me flippant. Nevertheless, this is a precise description of American journalism. For the sake of "readability" and "liveliness," the peripheries of events are simply stitched together; the core is omitted. Perhaps the very discrepancies and contradictions which Mr. Moorehead was compelled to encompass in one way or another will arouse some interest in the inwardness of the events whose consequences are now occupying the world at large. But a far greater likelihood is that the "smoothness" of *Life*-style journalism will make for a feeling of satiety—in this case, alas, only too well justified.

When Adam Delved . . .

NAMING-DAY IN EDEN. THE CREATION AND RECREATION OF LANGUAGE. By NOAH JONATHAN JACOBS. Macmillan. 159 pp. $3.95.

Reviewed by ABBY FINK

NAMING-DAY IN EDEN has clearly been designed for the man who knows nothing about the science of linguistics; it is a light concoction (a soufflé, according to the publishers) that may be downed whole, incurring no damage to the uninitiated digestive system. But scholar and linguist Noah Jonathan Jacobs has attempted to compress the vast and expanding range of linguistic theorizing into this small volume, which manages at once to be tense and rambling, informative and amusing.

Advocating no explicit position of his own, Dr. Jacobs enlarges eclectically upon the parable in Genesis 2:19-20, Adam's naming of the animals. The primogenitor was obviously up to something on Naming Day, and his activities are first imagined, and then considered with reference to theories on the origin of language. Dr. Jacobs neglects to mention whose theories they are, feeling perhaps that naming *them* will confuse the good-natured and unsystematic reader whom he seems to be addressing. Rational, emotive, imitative, and gesture theories pass in review, announced in a tone of homely parable ("Adam was barely one hour old on that fateful fall morning in the springtime of the world. . . ."), and, once thus established, are expanded into fascinating and lively digressions on the vagaries of naming.

The bat is subjected to a typical polyonymous inquiry: "How did Adam name the bat? Which characteristic impressed him at the moment of naming? Did its blindness move him to call it *murciélago* (Sp.), its baldness *chauve-souris* (Fr.), its shyness *pipistrello* (It.), its leathery skin *Laderlapp* (Dan.) or *böregér* (Hung., from *bör*, leather; *egér*, mouse), its preference for the night *nukteris* (Gr.), its resemblance to the mouse *Fledermaus* (Ger.), or *letutsaya mysh* (Rus.), the sound of its flapping wings *watwat* (Arab.), its winglike hands *chiroptera* (Lat. from Gr. *chir*, hand, plus *pteron*, wing), its resemblance to a lily (!) *liliac* (Rum.), its reputed love of bacon *bat* (OE *backe*, bacon)?"

As to Kenneth Burke, man, to Dr. Jacobs, is to be defined as a language-using animal whose attitudes and actions are reflected in his language. Speech, the product of the individual, engages in a perpetual struggle with language, the property of society. The dialectic that ensues affects the creation and usage of words and raises the question of whether language functions as the expression of the individual's private world or as a social institution for communication. Dr. Jacobs's sympathies seem to lie with society and communication, and we can observe him on occasion answering his own questions, protecting language as communication from the devil, the learned, the lexicographers, and the logicians. By choosing Adam as his starting point, Dr. Jacobs borrows the force and universality of the Biblical parable and applies it to his own notions; the association is not entirely a happy one, for parables, in general, demand to be answered by parables, and Dr. Jacobs's heuristic parables are not up to the style and quality of the Genesis text. The synopsis of ideas into the parable form is an interesting device, if not entirely successful. We see Adam enjoying the Himalayan air of the Garden, sneezing, and bowing to Eve, merely an actor in the dramatization and elucidation of naming theories. When he writes "Adam," Dr. Jacobs means "Man" and also writes "Man" once he has made use of the rhetorical Adam to begin his chapters.

The chapter "Names to Conjure With" dis-

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cusses the virtues and power of the word. True to form, the author first places Adam in a names-to-conjure-with situation by having Adam name the Lord *Adonai* and describing the Lord as "ordinarily loath to have his name revealed, preferring to appear under pseudonyms." People also are touchy about revealing their names, for, as in some primitive societies, possession of a person's name is power over him. Dr. Jacobs, aware of the power of the name, suggests a project for "the student of the contemporary social scene"—a study of "the name changing of immigrants, social climbers and cinema stars." "This latter group," he says, "might ponder the Freudian suggestion that it adopt names which lend themselves to erotic or slightly lewd connotations, perhaps names such as Joy, Bottome, Wetmore, Philpot, Bastert, Smalbehynd, and so forth. . . ."

St. Chrysostom was known as *The Light* and Chrysippus of Tarsus went oddly by the name of *The Column of the Portico*. "This figure of speech, known as synecdoche," adds Dr. Jacobs, "is a common form of appellation in the modern underworld, with an expected emphasis on the physical: *The Body, The Voice, Legs, Fingers, Greasy Thumb,* and so on." A synecdoche that Dr. Jacobs does *not* discuss is that of God as *The Name;* indeed he tends usually to ignore the splendid possibilities for linguistic digression that are in the Bible. The examples that substantiate the initial Adamic parable are drawn from the resources of thirty-six languages, including Algonquian and Swahili, and Dr. Jacobs has compiled a delightful and recondite anthology of naming anecdotes that frequently refers to literature, history, and politics. He is a sesquipedalian (someone, in his definition, who uses long words) and his own language is energetic, displaying a fondness for the obscure or antiquated word: "apricate," "synecthrous," "opomnemonysis," "swink," "thole," and "clogdogdo" all appear, leaving the reader without immediate access to the *Oxford English Dictionary* at somewhat of a loss.

The book, and its ideas, are rather freely and tenuously associated; they rely for continuity on the Genesis text—the event of naming. Where Dr. Jacobs himself seems to end up is in the Sapir-Whorf theory of language (which he does not mention): that language is the reflection of culture and should be studied as a branch of social anthropology. Sapir calls language "the symbolic guide to culture," and

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Jacobs echoes him with such statements as: "Each language creates its own patterns through which it interprets the world and incorporates different aspects of existence in its grammar," and "Human speech, being a reflection of national temperament, is the ideal expression of a people's character which can be discovered in the morphology and syntax of the language it speaks."

At the present time, when philosophy and anthropology, as well as literature, are concentrating upon language, an awareness of its importance and function is valuable, even necessary. Dr. Jacobs's book provides this awareness without becoming involved in the entanglements and controversies of linguistic theory.

Becoming a Victim

THE INTRUDER. By ADRIAAN VAN DER VEEN. Translated from the Dutch by James S. Holmes and Hans van Marle. Abelard-Schuman. 166 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by MANFRED WOLF

THE INTRUDER is a passionate but abstract novel about the lack of sensitivity shown Jewish suffering during the last war. The hero, a young Dutchman who lives in New York, falls in love with a Jewish girl who had fled before the Nazis from Holland. Neither their love nor the war constitutes the interest of the book; only the young man's involvement in a matter of conscience is explored, and this mainly through his relentless posing of one question: how can the Gentile—after all that has happened—fail to be an intruder?

The novel is almost entirely an exposition of the mental agony undergone by the (un-

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named) hero in his attempt to comprehend and feel the sufferings of the Jews. Striving to become worthy of his Vera, he loses all comfort. His difficult, slightly morbid honesty alienates his few American friends. His former innocence, a patronizing tolerance and liberalism, gives way to an unbearable sensitivity to Jewish suffering.

But real as his suffering is, it seems a misplaced pain for a shaky principle. The book's chief question is a variant of the old one: "Can you ever escape being a Jew?" "No—sooner or later you will be treated like one," is its answer. Apparently the corruption of others must force one into an artificial proclamation of Jewishness. The hero effects his personal salvation through such a proclamation: as Miss Lonelyhearts embraces suffering and succumbs to it, so the intruder becomes a Jew. But while Nathanael West is not seeking a solution to a problem of conduct, Van der Veen *is;* we know that suffering can be tragic, but is it enough to transmute mere sensitivity into illumination and responsibility?

Van der Veen phrases his question in terms too European for the book's American environment, which—while beautifully described—is mere backdrop. At best, Van der Veen writes about America like a perceptive European reporter:

"In the summer it was quite different. Then the train was blazing hot and towards six o'clock the men tumbled on to the platform with their collars loosened and their ties pulled down, battered to a pulp by the city. There was the sound of children's voices, light and shrill; and the women waiting in cars, efficient and cool, with their bare, tanned shoulders, honked on their horns, commanding and yet consoling, and tilted their heads forward for a moment, kindly permitting the sweaty breadwinner's kiss of welcome. Then one car after the other swung out powerfully, and I walked up the hill in clouds of dust that softly settled on me."

That the novel is out of touch with America is regrettable mainly because it professes to *be* in touch. Van der Veen actually mislabels some of the feelings he calls anti-Semitic: for example, the anti-refugeeism of the "commuters" (a typical American negative attitude to the new immigrant) that helps drive the hero to his final proclamation; or Vera's grotesque statement that she would not have been raped in an American college if she were not a Jew. Though much of Van der Veen's anger is thus misdirected, some of the writing maintains a kind of independent value, as in this passage:

". . . Take one of these well-fed Americans, stick him in a reeking concentration camp on a starvation diet for three years, throw his wife and children in the gas chamber, turn a few brutes loose on him with their boots and billy-clubs, and you'll see—he's become a Jew: frightened twitches, the most shameful instincts are brought to life and are there to be read on that face of his distorted to an idiotic grin. We are all of us Jews if we are condemned to be."

Van der Veen's book is, in spite of its shortcomings, a significant record of mental anguish. Its main question is always courageously put. Small wonder that the answer to the question, the conversion, has overtones of despair. The book ends ominously with V-E Day, a celebration which has become a bestial orgy, full of outrage and fear.

Book Reviewers in This Issue

Moses Hadas, well known as an author and translator in the field of classical studies, is Jay Professor of Greek at Columbia University.

A. V. Sherman, a former BBC and London *Observer* correspondent, is now economic adviser to the General Zionist Federation in Israel.

Stanley Edgar Hyman, author of *The Armed Vision,* contributed "Oxford's New Theological Dictionary" to our September 1958 issue.

Joel Carmichael, educated at Oxford, Columbia, and the Sorbonne, translated Sukhanov's classic memoirs of the Russian revolution.

Abby Fink, who is making her first appearance in Commentary, was born in 1939. She is now studying literature at Bennington College.

Manfred Wolf, another newcomer to these pages, teaches English at San Francisco State College. He has written for *Books Abroad.*

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